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ABSTRACT

This resource book for child care practitioners has been written for administrators, nursery school teachers and preschool or Head Start teachers who are interested in practical suggestions (1) for setting up classrooms, (2) for developing a curriculum for infants, toddlers and preschool children, (3) for meeting the social-emotional needs of children, and (4) for working effectively with parents and staff. "All About Child Care" is written in six acts. The first act provides the history and theory that places child care in a broad context. The second act focuses on setting up effective indoor and outdoor child care environments. The third and fourth acts focus on curriculum and on providing clear-cut guidelines for working with infants, 1-year-olds, 2-year-olds and preschool children. The fifth act describes the social and emotional characteristics of young children and provides ways of avoiding conflict and helping children feel good about themselves. The final act discusses ways of working effectively with staff and parents and describes techniques for evaluating children, teachers and the program. The suggestions offered have been implemented and validated at the Nova University Mailman Family Center and Lower House of the Nova University School. (Author/RH)

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ALL ABOUT CHILD CARE

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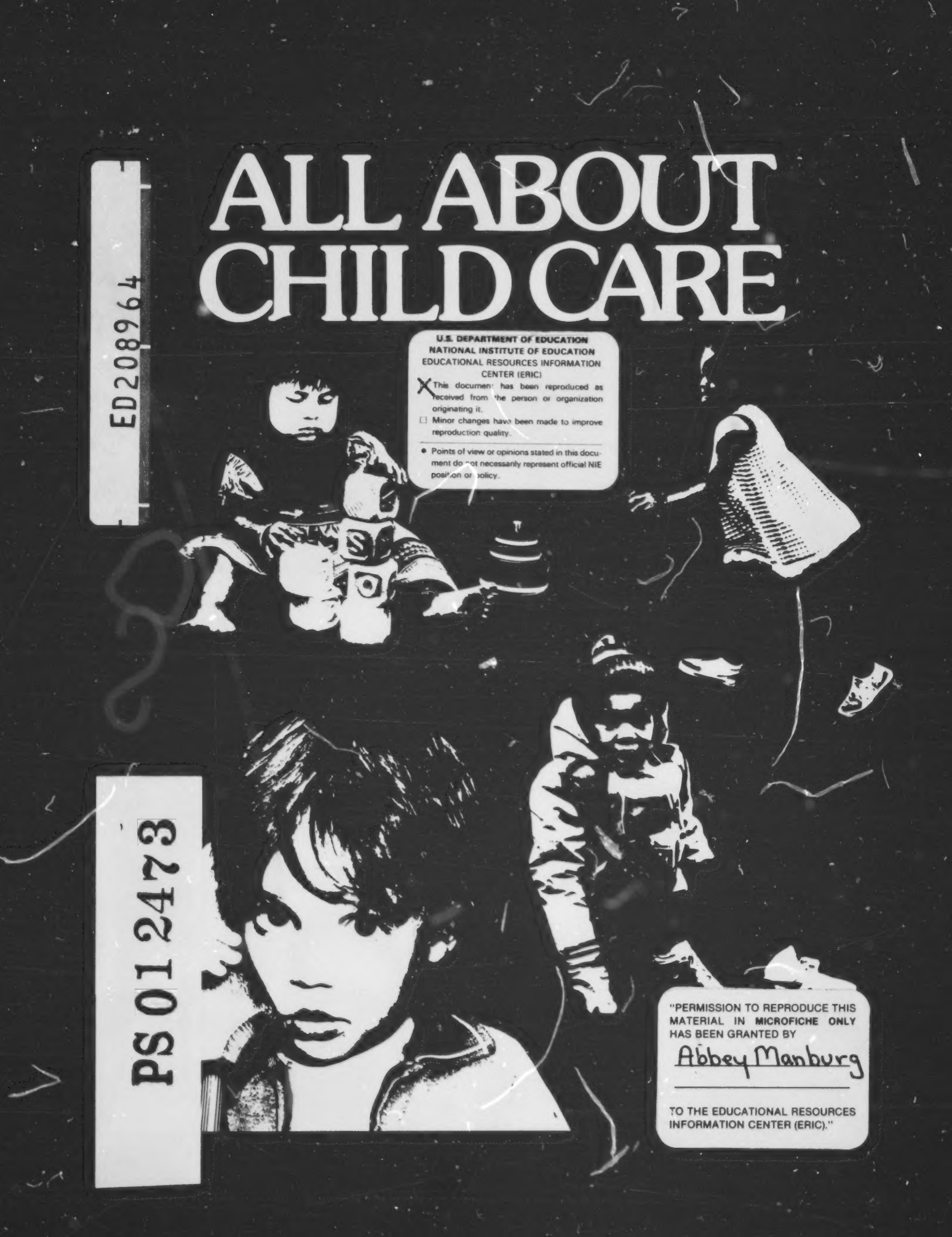

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ALL ABOUT CHILD CARE

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For the Child Development Associate:

The following key can be used to locate text material related to the thirteen CDA Functional Areas.

Functional Areas:

1. Safety-Act II, Scene IV; Act IV, Scene II
2. Health-Act II, Scene IV; Act IV, Scene II
3. Environment-Act II, Scenes I, II, III, IV
4. Physical-Act IV, Scene V
5. Cognitive-Act III, Scene II; Act IV, Scenes II, IV
6. Language-Act IV, Scene III
7. Creative-Act IV, Scene VI
8. Self-Concept-Act V, Scene II
9. Individual Strength-Act V, Scenes I, II; Act VI, Scene III
10. Social-Act V, Scene I
11. Group Management-Act IV, Scene VII
12. Home/Center-Act VI, Scene I
13. Staff-Act VI, Scene II, III

INTRODUCTION

All About Child Care is a comprehensive resource book for child care practitioners. It is written for administrators, nursery school teachers and preschool or Head Start teachers who are concerned with the ways and means of making child care work. *All About Child Care* provides practical suggestions for setting up classrooms, for developing a curriculum for infants, toddlers and preschool children, for meeting the social-emotional needs of children and for working effectively with parents and staff. Students preparing for roles as early childhood educators, as well as Child Development Associate candidates, can use *All About Child Care* as a primary text.

All About Child Care is written in 6 acts. The first act provides the history and theory that places child care in a broad context. The second act focuses on setting up an effective child-care environment for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, both in and out of doors. The third and fourth acts focus on curriculum and providing clear-cut guidelines for working with infants, one year olds, two year olds and preschool children. The fifth act describes the social and emotional characteristics of young children and provides tried and true ways of avoiding conflict and helping children feel good about themselves. The final act describes ways of working effectively with staff and parents and techniques for evaluating children, teachers and the program. A major plus in *All About Child Care* is that it combines the broad perspective of the early childhood professor with the practical know-how of the practitioner who works with children on a daily basis. The suggestions for setting up the classrooms, working with children and working with adults have been implemented and validated at the Nova University Mailman Family Center (birth-three) and Lower House of the Nova University School (3-5).

Change my
evil ways

ACT I

A CHILD CARE REVUE

SCENE I

PAST PERFORMANCES

The concept—"child care"—is a complex one; it has had numerous meanings during the last 150 years in the United States. Yes, child care has a long history. Many parents and child care providers feel that child care's history began with Head Start in 1965 or with the Title XX legislation in the 1970's. Our goal in this section is to share with you a brief history of child care in the United States and to present to you some of the child care options which exist in the 1980's.

•*Did you know that*...the Boston Infant School in 1828 was designed to provide a positive environment for children and to facilitate the entrance of women into the work force? Child care programs for infants and toddlers seem to be an innovation of the 1970's—they are not; children from the age of 18 months were accepted into the Boston Infant School.

•*Did you know that*...kindergarten, a program that is not mandatory in all the states today, was introduced into the United States by German immigrants in 1848? The first kindergarten for English speaking children was established in Boston in 1860. Kindergarten, as contrasted to the goal of physical care in the day nurseries of the same period, emphasized education for young children.

•*Did you know that*...the predecessor of modern day care was the day nursery movement? This movement began a period of rapid growth in the 1880's and 1890's due to urbanization and industrialization in the United States. By 1910 New York City had 85 day nurseries and a national organization was developed with 450 member centers. The current "hot" issues in child care relate to infant care, after-school care, and emergency care. Child care advocates of the 1980's who present arguments to the power structure regarding these new issues, may be unaware that it was common practice eighty years ago to have children as young as two weeks in day nurseries; after-school programs for school age children; emergency night care; and, lunches provided for school age children whose parents were employed.

•*Did you know that*...the day nurseries in the early decades had three basic goals—child care for children, employment and training for parents? Many day nurseries had employment books that included possible work settings for the mothers, primarily in domestic work. For those mothers who lacked the skills for domestic work, the staff of the day nurseries trained parents to do household skills. Abuses did exist in this system; some mothers were coerced to take positions they did not want.

•*Did you know that*...the professionalism of day nursery providers beginning in the 1920's altered the providers' roles and the focuses for child care? The trained teacher placed priority on education and deemphasized the child care aspects. This new priority led to the exclusion of infants and toddlers from the nursery. A second major change included the decrease in the hours in which nurseries served children. The new professional teacher, unlike the nursery attendant who she replaced, did not want to work the long hours. These unintended outcomes which were brought about by the "new" nursery teacher had dramatic effects on the type of care provided for children. These changes—emphasis on education and the deemphasis of support for the family—continued until the 1960's.

•*Did you know that*...the day nursery movement was "infiltrated" by the social welfare philosophy in the 1920's? The social workers felt that the day nursery was for families experiencing pathological problems. This philosophy contrasted dramatically with the earlier view of the day nursery as a vehicle to serve families living in poverty who were trying to improve their conditions by having the mother work. Social workers, beginning in the 1920's and continuing into the 1960's, worked from a "deficit view" of parents and their children. This approach focused on the families' weaknesses (i.e. "deficits") rather than on their strengths. The parents' day-to-day needs were not an issue with this new philosophy.

•*Did you know that*...government support for child care began during the depression and continues

into the 1980's? The funds available for child care beginning in 1933 did not have children as the primary audience, but the employment of unemployed teachers, cooks, and nurses. With the outbreak of World War II, it was a patriotic necessity for women to return to work. Since many of the women in the war-time work force were mothers, child care became a need. It is interesting to note that the needs of children were not the primary concern with this influx of federal dollars. The end of World War II led to the closing of two thousand eight hundred centers, leaving 1,500,000 children without day care. Policy makers failed to notice that a majority of the mothers did not return to their "proper" place in the home; they remained in the work force. Most mothers were forced to make family day care arrangements with relatives and neighbors. These informal arrangements accounted for 80 percent of all child care placements.

•*Did you know that*...parents in the 1950's and 1960's who put their children in day care settings were considered to be socially deviant? The mother's place, according to the ideology of the time, was in the home. The enrollment of the child in a nursery school (two or three hours per day) was acceptable in the philosophy of the period since the goals of nursery school were education and socialization; the primary caregiver remained the mother. While the policy makers and psychologists told the mothers to remain in the home, the mothers returned to the work force in record numbers (1 in 8 mothers worked in 1940; 2 in 5 mothers worked in the 1960's).

•*Did you know that*...a combination of forces in the 1970's and 1980's led to an acceptance of child care, not limited to the children with serious personal and familial problems, but for the total society? Psychologists in the 1940's and 1950's concluded that the mother's place should be in the home. New studies in the 1960's found that quality day care compares well with quality home care. A second force was the development of the women's movement. Most participants in the women's movement agreed that mothers need a choice between remaining at home and participating in the world of work. Some mothers have no choice as single parents—work is related to economic survival. The third force is the economic climate of the late 1970's and early 1980's that requires both parents to work if they aspire to have a middle-class life style.

As we read these brief capsules of child care history in America, we recognize that child care in the last 150 years has had many faces. Themes have emerged, faded away, and then reappeared in a somewhat altered form. A prime example of this historical cycle is the focus on the infant and toddler. In the early 1920's child care for infants was a national priority. Then, with the emergence of the early childhood professional, the emphasis shifted away from infant care and toward preschool education. Now again, in the 80's we've come full circle. The infant has emerged from oblivion and infant-toddler has become a current issue.

SCENE II

POPULAR THEMES

A closer look at the chronology of child care trends in America demonstrates, even more sharply, the link between child care philosophy and socio-economic conditions. This does not necessarily mean that programs have been developed without a theoretical base. It does mean that very often the need for a day care program is established first with theory coming later or picked up along the way.

Montessori

The very first and best example of a child care program spawning a theory took place in Italy in the early 1900's.[2] In the midst of a wave of social reforms, the Italian government began repairing and building better housing for workers. The workers' young children, left on their own all day, vandalized the new housing. The government decided to

establish programs in the housing complexes that would provide supervision for the children. Dr. Maria Montessori, the first woman physician in Italy, directed the first of these new programs, the Children's House, in Rome. The Children's House opened in 1902.

Dr. Montessori had developed her interest in education in a somewhat round about way. In her early years, she served as an assistant in a psychiatric clinic. From there, in 1898, she was appointed as director of a state supported school for children who were diagnosed as mentally deficient. Here she had an opportunity to take a close look at children whose learning process was slowed down. Maria Montessori recognized that learning for children is facilitated by the manipulation of concrete materials. In her new position as director of the Children's House, Dr. Montessori was able to put her ideas into practice. The theories and practices developed from that first Montessori Children's House have had an enormous influence on child care practices in Italy, in the United States and throughout the world.

Here are some of Montessori's ideas that have influenced child care practices.

1. The early years are ideal for learning.
2. Children learn best by the manipulation of concrete materials.
3. Learning materials can be designed to promote a specific concept.
4. Educational programs for young children should be organized so that activities and objectives for learning move from less complex and demanding to more complex.
5. Children need a variety of sensory experiences including touch, taste and smell to develop their full capacities.
6. Children appreciate beauty and order. With guidance and encouragement children will learn to maintain a beautiful and orderly environment.
7. Children are intrinsically motivated to learn and are capable of taking an increasingly more active role in planning and supervising their own learning.
8. Parents are very important and should be involved in their child's education.

Modern Montessori Programs

Montessori schools, based on the original Montessori concepts and utilizing many of the same kinds of concrete materials developed by Maria Montessori, are still popular. Interestingly enough, most of the Montessori type schools service middle or upper income families, a complete reversal from the early Montessori program, which was designed for poor children. This has come about in part because of expenses, not beliefs about child care. Teachers in Montessori programs must have special training and this training is costly. The salaries of an adequate number of such highly trained Montessori certified teachers would raise the cost of a private program beyond the reach of many working parents. Yet, if it had not been the desire of upper middle class families to provide the richest background possible for their children, many of Montessori's methods and materials might have been lost to us during the period from the 1920's to the 1950's. At that time it was felt most strongly that a woman's place was in the home and day care was only for the children so unfortunate that their mother could not stay home with them.

Froebel and Kindergartens

The climate of social reform that provided the background for Montessori's work encouraged other ideas about helping young children. One of the ideas that became important was the kindergarten. Kindergartens, special "preschool" experiences for children, were not a new idea by 1900. The concept of the kindergarten dated from the work of the German educator Frederic Froebel in the 1840's and 1850's. Froebel introduced the idea of learning readiness. He suggested that playing with natural materials like sand, water, clay, and wood provides a foundation for academic learning. In the United States, however, kindergartens gained in popularity only when large numbers of non-English speaking immigrant children had to be brought into the public school system. In 1875 there were only about 95 kindergartens in the United States. By 1900 there were about 5,000.[3] The kindergarten movement gained even more impetus as black educators endorsed the kindergarten concept as a way of advancing black children.

Arnold Gesell

The work of Arnold Gesell provided the theoretical base for preschool programs in the United States during the middle years of this century. Dr. Gesell, a physician, believed that patterns of behavior unfold automatically during the course of the child's development in the same way that the child's physical growth and motor development unfold automatically. Gesell was one of the early leaders in the U.S. in the systematic study of young children's behavior. He and his colleagues at Yale spent many years observing and recording the behavior of young children and infants. Gesell's work provided teachers, parents, and psychologists with an outline of what to expect of normal children during the course of development. Preschool programs in the 1930's through the 1950's were, for the most part, enrichment programs for middle and upper class children. They provided children with opportunities to play with other children their own age and develop social skills. Using the Gesell norms as a guide, teachers could provide the children with enriching experiences appropriate to their age and with opportunities to interact with other children. From Gesell's work on age typical behavior we have gained:[5]

1. Information that helps teachers and psychologists assess a child's level of intellectual, social and motor development.

2. The concept of maturational readiness. A child cannot be expected to progress to a given behavior if he is not at the appropriate developmental level;

3. Data that enables parents, teachers and psychologists to identify children whose behavior is not typical and who may need special help.

Jean Piaget

Jean Piaget was a Swiss psychologist who, like Gesell, began the systematic study of children's behavior during the 1920's. And, like Gesell, he also identified different developmental levels, or stages. However, Piaget focused on children's intellectual development and he had a different theory about the process of change from stage to stage. Piaget believed that the child develops intellectually as a result of both maturation and environment. Appropriate experiences could help the child's intellectual growth and children who were severely limited in their chances to explore or interact with others could be slowed in their development. Piaget's theories gained wide acceptance in the United States during the 1960's when Head Start and other programs were initiated to aid children whose intellectual and social development may have been slowed by poverty.

Piaget identified four stages of intellectual development.[6]

1. *The sensori-motor period.* During this period, from birth to between age two or three, the child's learning and thinking are all based on his own body movements and the touching and handling of objects themselves. The child learns by what he does, not by what he is told.

2. *The preoperational period.* From about age two to age six or seven the child begins to use symbols such as words in her thinking. She can use language as part of her learning and interpretation of the world. For example, a child can "pretend" to be a fireman and learn by her play activities. The child can gain information from what she is told by parents, teachers and other children.

3. *The concrete operational period.* During this time, from age six or seven to age eleven or twelve, the child acquires the ability to work out problems and deal with ideas "inside her head." The child can imagine, without actually doing it, what would happen if an apple were cut in halves or quarters, and she can understand at the same time that these halves or quarters can be put back together to form the whole apple again. Younger children, who must rely on what they see at any given moment, might think the apple quarters are different from the apple. They might even think that they have more apple because there are more pieces when the apple is quartered.

4. *Formal operations.* By age fourteen or fifteen, most normal adolescents are able to begin to deal with ideas themselves, without reference to anything concrete. For example, a mechanic looking for a problem in an automobile engine must first think about all the possible things that could cause the problem. Then she must develop, in her mind,

a system for testing out each of the possibilities so that each one is eliminated in turn. This system for testing out all possibilities is a formal operation—a mental system for manipulating a set of ideas. In this case the ideas are about what might be wrong with the engine. Given this type of problem, even bright nine-year-olds would probably not work out a systematic way of troubleshooting an engine in their heads. Instead, they would try one thing and then another at random, and they might forget to check some of the possibilities.

According to Piaget, learning is an active process. Children do not just absorb knowledge. They actively construct their own theories about the world throughtout many interactions with their environment. Children learn by a process of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is the interpretation of a new object or experience in accordance with ideas or experiences the child had already had. A toddler who has never seen a horse before may react to his first exposure by saying, "see big doggie." According to this child's way of organizing her world of knowledge four-legged things are dogs, so this must be a dog. Accommodation requires the modification of the child's ideas about the world to take into account new information. When mother says, "No, that animal is a horse. He is bigger than a dog," the child creates a new class of animal—big animals with four legs called horses.

Although the writings of Piaget are difficult for even the most astute scholar his ideas have had an important influence on child care practices today, providing guidelines for aiding children in their intellectual development. These guidelines include the following:

1. At every age of development, beginning with infancy, the adult should structure the child's environment to provide optimal learning opportunities.
2. Material that is too difficult cannot be assimilated. Material that is too easy does not demand accommodation.
3. Because learning is an active process the child must be given many opportunities to manipulate and discover on his own. An environment that is already structured for the child inhibits exploration.
4. Children have an internal need to practice a skill they are in the process of acquiring. They should be allowed this opportunity to practice even if the repetition is dull for the adult to watch.

The Learning Theorists

Still another set of theories became important for early childhood educators during the period in the 1960's when programs were being designed to remediate or to accelerate the child's level of cognitive development. These concepts are loosely defined by the term "learning theory."[7] We might say that Piaget, Gesell, and even Montessori have learning theories, but this term in the United States today has a particular meaning. When we refer to "learning theory" we refer to all those ideas about the nature of learning that go back to early systematic experiments with animal behavior. In fact, we must go back to the laboratory of Ivan Pavlov, a Russian physiologist, during the period of the Revolution in Russia. Pavlov found that a dog would exhibit a new behavior (or learning) when a new event—or stimulus—was associated with a response already natural in the dog. The first such instance occurred with dogs that salivated (showed an increased flow of saliva in their mouths) when the attendant came to feed them. It was typical for the dogs to do this when they saw and smelled their food. However, Pavlov noticed that the dogs began salivating whenever they heard the bell that rang when the laboratory door opened. For these dogs, the sound of the bell was associated with the presence of food. This incident began a study of ways of encouraging new responses (or learning).

Pavlov's systematic work was picked up by psychologists in the United States. It was found that a child could be conditioned to fear or enjoy something depending upon the circumstances surrounding it when it was introduced (Watson). It was found that reward was highly effective in producing new behaviors and punishment was less effective (Skinner). A system was developed for breaking tasks or new learnings down to their smallest components and rewarding the learners (whether pigeons or persons) as they mastered each step along the way (Skinner). Underneath all these findings, there are certain assumptions about

behavior and learning. One of these assumptions is that everything can be trained, and the speed of the individual's progress is related to the successful design of the training or teaching process. This differs very greatly from the theories of Piaget or Gesell, who both emphasize limits on learning set by the child's developmental level. Learning theory emphasizes the activities of the teacher rather than activities of the learner. Piaget's theory describes an interactive process. The teacher provides activities and materials and encourages, but it is the child who determines their meaning to him and the pace of his progress. Under learning theory, the person doing the teaching decides exactly what will be learned—the appropriate response—the steps by which the response will be learned, and the pace of the learning.

If you were concerned with teaching deprived children a large number of words quickly, the concepts and methods of learning theory would be very useful. This is, in fact, what happened in one special program. This program, designed by Carl Bereiter and Siegfried Engleman, was able to help children increase vocabulary through encouragement and praise by the teacher.[8]

Obviously, persons designing programs to speed children's progress find learning theory a useful basis for their planning. Whether there are developmental limits to what can be taught, or whether genuine learning depends also on the way in which information is taken in and used by the learner are issues still under debate.

In summary, we find that theories about children's development and learning tend to be based on the intellectual and social climate of the time. The use of theory in programs for young children, however, tends to be based on practical needs. Montessori's approach was developed as a way of using special materials and methods with a special population—children of poor parents who had to leave their children unsupervised while they worked.

In the 1920's, when Montessori's ideas began to be widely circulated in the United States, it was during a period of relative prosperity and a time when it was believed that all mothers should stay home with children.

1930-50's...Even during the Depression of the 1930's the expectation (although not always the reality) was that the child was best left home with his mother. These ideas about child rearing continued through the 1950's. Care for the children of mothers involved in war plants was considered a temporary necessity. There was little emphasis on the positive value of such care. During this period the preschools that existed were viewed as enrichment experiences for the child, a "plus" for the youngster who was at home with his mother.

1960-70's...In the 1960's the emphasis in preschool programming, spurred by the War on Poverty, shifted from enrichment for the children of parents who chose to send their children to a preschool to the goal of increasing the rate of the intellectual development of young children reared in poverty. The theories of Jean Piaget were useful in the design of such programs. Gesell's theory, which did not emphasize acceleration and remediation, began to be used much less frequently as the basis for planning programs, although elements are used for tests to determine the child's level of functioning.

While Montessori's work would have been appropriate to the needs of programs concerned with aiding underprivileged children, the cost of Montessori trained staffs and special Montessori materials is high. Thus, Montessori programs have remained primarily (with some notable exceptions) private programs for upper income level children. It is interesting to note that once the trend for programs to accelerate progress became established, many upper income parents wanted the same kinds of programs for their children also.

SCENE III

COMING ATTRACTIONS

The 1980's finds us on the threshold of a new era for child care providers. No longer can we divide the child care seekers into two kinds of consumers—the consumer who seeks out child care in order to

return to work and the consumer who seeks out child care in order to provide a richer background for her child.

The signs of the times are loud and clear.

•More and more mothers are going back to work so that child care is becoming more of a necessity and less of an option.

•More and more parents are becoming knowledgeable about child care curriculums and about the intellectual potential of young children. Parents will continue to ask for a warm, safe, supportive climate for their children, but they will also ask for intellectual stimulation.

•More and more government agencies are taking a hard look at standards, training and licensing requirements. The larger the use of child care facilities the greater the need for regulation.

•More and more research regarding the effectiveness of day care is being published and distributed.

New research demonstrates that:

a. Children in a quality day care environment perform as well on a variety of intellectual and social measures as children kept at home.[9] [10]

b. Children in a high quality child care environment perform significantly better on a variety of measures than children in a low quality environment.[11]

Child care providers in the next decade are bound to look at themselves more and more as professionals. They will be asking questions of themselves, of their supervisors, of their board and of themselves.

•What are my duties and responsibilities as a day care provider?

•What knowledge and skills do I need in my present position?

•What kinds of resources are available to help me acquire this knowledge and these skills?

•What kinds of career opportunities are open to me?

•What are the guidelines for a quality day care experience?

•What kind of parent involvement should I seek out?

•How can I achieve this involvement?

•How can I as a day care provider serve as an advocate of children?

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4. Charles E. Cunningham and D. Keith Osborn, A Historical Examination of Blacks in Early Childhood Education, *Young Children*, Vol. 34 No. 3, March 1979, pp. 20-29.

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ACT II

SETTING THE STAGE

SCENE I

THE INFANT ROOM

Story

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert were on their way home from visiting a day care center where they were thinking about placing their child. Unfortunately they had not been able to visit while the center was in session, but they did get a chance to meet the director, and get a tour of the center.

Mrs. Gilbert:
"That director is certainly a delightful woman, warm, enthusiastic and really in love with her job."

Mr. Gilbert:
"I feel the same way about her personality, but I wasn't so impressed with the classrooms. They seemed to be cluttered and disorganized."

Mrs. Gilbert:
"Well, it is Friday afternoon, she might not have had a chance to clean the place up."

Mr. Gilbert:
"That's not what I'm talking about. What I mean is that the place didn't seem to have any real feeling of being set up for children. There were no comfortable places for a child to go, no way for a child to find a quiet place to pretend, or build or to look at pictures."

Mrs. Gilbert:
"I agree about the classroom, but we won't ever find a perfect place. I'd rather have a warm director than a well-organized learning environment."

Certainly Mrs. Gilbert is right. Given the choice between a good director and a good physical setting, we would select a center with a good director. At the same time we would not like to make this kind of compromise. The physical appearance of a center tells us a lot about the adults who work inside. Adults who understand children and who recognize their needs, will create an environment that reflects this understanding.

In this section we develop a set of guidelines for developing indoor and outdoor environments that meet the needs of children. Our discussion is divided into three parts.

1. An indoor environment for infants and toddlers
2. An indoor environment for preschool children
3. Setting up a playground

Because infants and toddlers are relative newcomers to child care, we will find many child care centers in which the primary space given to infants and toddlers is crib space. In some centers cribs are scattered throughout the room. In other centers they are placed around the periphery with the center of the room used for changing and feeding.

An Ideal Set-Up for Infants and Toddlers

Room arrangements for infants and toddlers are often dictated by economics rather than philosophy. The younger the child, the more expensive it is to provide quality care and the more difficult it becomes for parents to meet the fees.

In an ideal set-up infants and toddlers have at least three kinds of space.

1. A quiet sleeping room or area where infants can be put to sleep at any time during the day.
2. A feeding area where infants can spend their waking hours.
3. A toddler room for playing, eating, and sleeping with cots or mats that meet the licensing regulations and that can be stacked when not in use.

SLEEP AREA

Cribs

There should be one crib for each infant in the center. (If enrollment goes down extra cribs should be stored.) Cribs should be placed at least 18 inches

apart and should meet all health and safety standards. Crib rails should be not more than 2 3/8 inches apart and rail height at the lowest position should be at least 9 inches.

Toys

It is important to minimize the amount of awake time each child spends in a crib. If a child is awake in a crib for even a short period of time make sure that she has at least one crib toy.

•*For Infants 3 Months and Under:* Crib mobiles that attach to the side of the crib or hang from the ceiling, wind chimes, musical mobiles and see-through crib bumpers.

•*For Infants 4 to 7 Months:* Cradle gyms, clear see-through rattles, clutch balls, and teething rings.

•*For Infants 8 to 12 Months:* Busy-boxes, squeak toys, rattles, soft cloth dolls, and mirror toys.

•*Rocking Chair:* Although rocking chairs take up more space than lounge chairs, infants are quieted and comforted by a rocking chair.

Changing Table

The changing table should be washable and at waist-height with a two inch high lip to prevent the baby from falling off. Changing materials and a diaper pail should be within easy reach. A mirror behind the changing table is especially desirable.

Cubbies

It is important to have a special storage bin for every infant. The storage bins may be stacked beside the changing table or may be attached to each crib.

Bulletin Board

It is essential for every infant room to have a bulletin board, where emergency telephone numbers, schedules, parents numbers, etc. can be posted. It is a good idea to reserve one section of the board for PRIORITY NOTES. Eg. Place Larry on stomach for sleeping.

Mobiles

Young infants focus best within an 8 to 10 inch range. Mobiles that hang from the ceiling may make a room attractive to adults but they do not do anything for infants. In order to get the most out of mobiles, hang the mobiles on individual cribs, or above the changing table.

PLAY AREA

All infants need to spend some part of every day out of the crib. For infants three months old and under, time out of the crib is usually spent in care giving routines or in being held and rocked. Babies four months and older, in addition to the stimulation they receive during diapering, feeding and bathing, enjoy brief periods of play. This means that every infant care facility should have a safe, washable indoor play area. This area should be large enough for crawling, creeping, and rolling over. It should include a variety of infant toys. It should provide opportunities for different sensory experiences—sounds, sights, tastes, and textures.

Equipment for the Infant Play Area

1. An unbreakable mirror placed horizontally to invite mirror play.
2. A low shelf with a variety of age appropriate toys that are within the infants reach.
3. An out-of-reach record player.
4. Several bolsters of different size.
5. A busy-board wall that invites problem solving.
6. Overhead wind mobiles and music mobiles.
7. A low wood bar to encourage infants to pull to standing.

Play Pens

Play pens have advantages and disadvantages. Advantages are that toys can be kept inside, the mat can be kept clean and sterile, and the babies are safe. Disadvantages are that infants are restricted in their explorations and are separated from adults and other children. A play yard arrangement large enough for two or three infants and accessible to an adult is a good compromise.

Walkers

Walkers like play pens have both advantages and disadvantages. Children who are learning to push with their feet enjoy the mobility of a walker. At the same time walkers can be frustrating to babies who have not learned to steer, and who keep getting themselves stuck in corners.

Play Structures

If room is available, infants in the crawling stage enjoy a padded or carpeted play structure that provides opportunities for crawling up and down, around, in and out.

Record Player

A record player is a must in an infant play area. Lullabies, nursery rhymes, rhythm records and even classical music provide satisfying listening experiences for infants.

Toy Shelves

No infant should be left during a wakeful period without access to an age appropriate toy. Some toys should be placed on a low shelf so that they are accessible to creeping infants.

Floor Surface

A high quality indoor-outdoor carpet, or a resilient rubber tile are good surfaces for creeping and crawling babies.

Walls

Babies enjoy walls with different textures, designs and pictures. Make sure that pictures are infant rather than adult eye level.

High Chairs/Feeding Tables

By seven months most babies enjoy sitting in a high chair or at a baby tenda for eating finger foods. They are likely to want to be held during bottle time.

Sensory Table or Bin

Infants enjoy a variety of sensory experiences, splashing water, finger painting with pudding or rubbing hands with cornstarch. You will need a large waterproof container for this kind of activity.

SCENE II

THE TODDLER ROOM

Unlike infants, toddlers can use the same room for sleeping and playing except during naptime. Cots should be stacked in order to maximize play space.

Some Basic Guidelines for Setting Up a Toddler Room

1. The toddler is developing her gross motor skills. She needs opportunities to practice running, climbing, throwing, pushing, pulling and carrying things around.

Therefore: the toddler classroom should provide opportunities for practicing motor skills. Indoor slides, indoor climbing structures, riding toys, and rocking boats are important for the toddler classroom.

2. Toddlers need tight spaces as well as open expanses. Small spaces allow the toddler an opportunity to learn about size. At the same time a small space can make a small child feel comfortable and secure.

Therefore: create small cozy places in your classroom—tunnels, playhouses, cartons, or corners to cuddle in.

3. Toddlers are just learning to say "it's mine". For the most part, they have not learned about sharing and cannot understand why some things like toys have to be shared while other things like lunch and shoes cannot be shared.

Therefore: make sure that most of the toys and equipment in the classroom are conducive to group play. Very attractive one of a kind toys can initiate power struggles.

4. Toddlers are delighted with rhythm, with music, with pictures and with books.

Therefore: make sure that your classroom has a record player, a collection of records, attractive pictures at the child's level and a library corner with indestructable books. A piano or a guitar and a teacher who can play them is a special asset.

5. Toddlers tend to be exhuberant and excitable and can make a shambles of a room in no time flat.

Therefore: the task of cleaning up should be simplified. Limit the numbers of small, loose toys that are kept within reach of children. Provide attractive containers for toys that make cleaning up fun. A carton cage or Noah's ark can be used as a container for stuffed animals. A corner of the classroom with lines drawn on the floor or marked on the carpet, can be a parking lot for wheel toys. Colorful plastic laundry baskets can be used as the ball bin.

6. Toddlers are active and can be very noisy.

Therefore: with the exception of areas that are used for eating, art and water play, the toddler room should be carpeted. Also, if it is possible, use acoustic tiles on the ceiling to absorb sound.

7. Toddlers learn through active exploration.

Therefore: provide areas in the classroom where toddlers can finger paint, play with water and clay, experience different textures and create different sounds. Create a texture wall where the children feel different surfaces, hard, soft, smooth, rough, furry, slippery, etc., or a sound wall where the children can ring a bell, toot a horn, squeak a rubber animal or beat a drum.

8. Between one and a half and two and a half we see the emergence of constructive and pretend play.

Therefore: provide areas in your classroom for block building (avoid hard wooden blocks), dress-up, car and truck play and housekeeping play.

9. Toddlers enjoy sitting at tables and chairs.

Therefore: provide safe and appropriate chairs and tables for serving meals and snacks and for art and sensory experiences.

10. Toddlers are creatures of habit and are disturbed by too many changes in their environment.

Therefore: once you have created an attractive and orderly classroom, change the basic layout as little as possible. Toddlers gain a sense of security by finding everything in its place. It is especially important for toddlers to have their own special private space (a cubby or a shelf) that is never changed or disturbed.

EQUIPPING A TODDLER ROOM

Tables and Chairs

Toddlers enjoy sitting at tables and chairs, not only for eating, but also for sensory experiences, puzzle play and art activities. Tables should be toddler size (16 to 18 inches high) with enough space for each child in the room. Trapezoid tables are desirable because they can be rearranged in interesting ways.

High Chairs

Although by 1 1/2 children can eat comfortably at a low table and chair combination, high chairs are usually better for the younger child who is not self-feeding.

A good rule of thumb is one high chair for every three children under the age of 18 months, but space limitations and individual preferences should also be considered.

Climbing Structures

Because toddlers spend much of their day practicing their motor skills, the choice of climbing structures is critical. The size and number of climbing structures that are placed in a classroom depend on several factors:

1. How much space do you have?
2. How many children are using the space?
3. How well equipped is your playground?
4. How much outdoor time does the weather permit?

Desirable climbing structures include:

•*Slides:* A toddler slide is an important piece of basic equipment. A good indoor slide has a crawl space underneath and is designed so that the stairs are easy to mount.

•*Rocking Boat:* A rocking boat that converts to a stair case is a particularly desirable structure. It provides opportunities to practice different motor skills and, at the same time, encourages cooperative play.

•*Special Structures:* Ramps, wedges, tunnels and platforms can provide further practice in motor skills. Again, it is important to remember that the toddler needs room to move around. A desirable climbing structure that takes up too much space is really not desirable.

Imaginative Play Equipment

Early pretending is very simple with a strong imitative quality. Children replay experiences that are most familiar such as driving, sleeping, cooking and eating. A doll size stove, sink, table, high chair and crib encourage early pretending. Make

sure, too, that there is a place for a doll tea set, cooking utensils, play food and, of course, ethnically appropriate dolls. A nice addition to a pretend area is a mirror with dress up jewelry, ties, and scarves and a "steering wheel" chair.

Cuddle-up Structures

Toddlers need closed, protected, quiet space just as much as they need space to move around in. Cushions wedged in a corner, a bean-bag chair, an empty television cabinet lined with carpet are some ideas for private spaces.

Music Equipment

Every toddler room should include a record player. The record player requires a relatively high shelf (36 inches off the floor) with a place for records and an electric outlet. Toddlers should not have access to the record player. Rhythm instruments also require a storage bin out of reach of the children so that their use is controlled.

Shelving

Because toddlers enjoy taking things off shelves and throwing them around the room, the number of accessible toys should be limited. It is a good idea to use baskets and bins to store balls and stuffed animals. Pull toys, shapes, sorting and other manipulative toys can be placed on low accessible shelves. Double shelves that can be folded together are useful if your space is limited.

Other Essentials

•*Toileting needs:* Most children under two are still in diapers so you should include a changing table, a diaper bin and a storage unit for clean diapers. You will also need potty chairs for those toddlers who are ready to give up diapers.

•*Storage:* Since you want to limit the amount of toys in the room at any one time, you need plenty of storage for toys, art materials and other equipment when they are not in use. It is especially desirable to have an easily accessible closet or storage room.

•*Wall Decor:* A bulletin board where you can post the daily schedule, notes for the parents, as well as licenses, health permits and fire evacuation plan is essential. It is also desirable to have wall space for displaying children's work, photographs and language pictures. This wall space is for the children, and so must be at their eye level.

SCENE III

THE PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM

Just as an infant and toddler classroom is designed to meet the special needs of the very young child, a preschool classroom must take into account the social, emotional and intellectual characteristics of the three, four and five year olds.

1. The preschool child appreciates a beautiful classroom.

Therefore: the classroom should be inviting and attractive. If there is a choice, the walls should be painted in a neutral or light pastel color, with the pictures and materials providing the color. *Shelves* are critical. Even the best equipped classrooms are often short of shelf space. Shelves serve the double function of dividing space into discrete areas and providing a place where toys and learning materials are accessible to children.

2. The preschool child enjoys an orderly classroom.

Therefore: materials should be arranged and coded so that everything in the classroom has its appropriate place. An ideal plan is to color code or picture code the shelves and materials so that it is easy to remember where everything belongs.

3. The preschool child needs a variety of social experiences—experiences with large groups, experiences with small groups, and individual experiences.

Therefore: the classroom should provide a variety of spaces.

•*Large group space:* A circle on the carpet, individual mats that can be placed in a circle on a

carpet, round or trapezoid tables can be used for large groups.

•*Small group space:* Interesting areas where the space is defined by lofts or corner enclosures encourage children to interact in small groups.

•*Individual space:* Private; all by myself time, can be provided by a reading corner with a rocking chair or beanbag chair, a telephone booth structure or even a large carton with a fuzzy rug on the bottom.

4. The preschool child needs opportunities to pretend.

Therefore: every preschool classroom should provide spaces and the equipment for imaginative play. Housekeeping equipment, dress-up corner, a mirror, a telephone, dolls and dishes are basic requirements.

5. A preschool child must have experience with music and art.

Therefore: the classroom should be equipped with a record player, a variety of records including marches, folk songs, nursery rhymes, instruments and a place where children can sit on or march in a circle. And, for art, there should be tables and chairs, a sink, a non-carpeted floor area and plenty of eye-level wall space to display the children's work. Easels, drying racks and magic marker boards are desirable.

6. Preschool children need help in learning to be considerate of each other.

Therefore: a classroom should be arranged to make it easy for children to be considerate.

•Noisy areas—music, block play and pretend play—should be separated from quiet areas—library corner or the problem solving areas.

•Book shelves should be used to control the traffic flow so that children won't upset each others work.

7. Preschool children enjoy working at tables.

Therefore: tables and chairs should be placed in the art and snack area and in some of the work areas. Children may enjoy using tables for practicing writing, putting puzzles together, playing math or language games.

8. Preschool children need opportunities to play with blocks and to work with a variety of construction toys.

Therefore: every preschool classroom should have a block area where children can learn to construct. Block play helps children develop their imagination and creativity and, at the same time, teaches mathematic and spatial concepts.

9. Preschool children are developing their language and communication skills.

Therefore: a preschool classroom should provide space and materials that encourage language development. Library books, display counters, eye-level wall treatment, puppet stages, elevated platforms, mirrors, cameras and tape recorders can all be used to encourage language development.

10.Preschool children are ready and eager to learn new concepts.

Therefore: a preschool classroom should include manipulative play, problem solving and science areas. The traditional preschool science corner should not be simply a display area, but should provide opportunities for hands-on experiences. It must include:

•Science Area—pets (check with health department), plants, sink and float activities, magnet challenges, shells and rocks that can be classified, a scale, prisms, magnifying glasses, color paddles and a sand table.

•Manipulative Play and Problem Solving—a variety of materials that encourage sorting, ordering, number skills development and pattern matching and identification: number puzzles, peg boards, table blocks, picture puzzles, counting games, stacking toys, color and shape games, sequencing boards, sewing cards, insert games, etc. are included in this area.

Arranging the Preschool Classroom

THE BIG PICTURE

In order to meet the different needs of the preschool child it is important to take a very broad

look at the way the space is utilized. Specifically, we need to consider three facets:

1. How can we use space to control group size?
2. How can we separate noisy and quiet spaces?
3. How can we control traffic flow?

Using Space to Control Group Size

We have said that children need opportunities to spend time in large groups, in small groups and by themselves. A carefully engineered classroom provides areas that invite different size groups. A circle in the middle of the floor is an invitation to form a large group. A table for two or three or an interest area set off by bookshelves, a loft or a playhouse invites children to cluster in small groups. "All by myself" places can be created by a book corner with a rocking chair, a small carton or a beanbag chair.

Separating Noisy and Quiet Areas

In a well-designed classroom there is a separation of noisy and quiet activities. Activities like reading, problem solving and language skills that require concentration are on one side of the classroom. Noisy activities like block building, climbing and music, are placed on the other side. Art and imaginative play, which are relatively quiet activities that do not require excessive concentration, can serve as buffers.

Controlling Traffic Flow

In a toddler classroom where children are not very good at negotiating corners, we are careful about not placing furniture in a place where toddlers may be running. With older children, we do just the reverse. We use the placement of furniture to discourage follow the leader games and encourage the formation of small groups. We can also use the placement of furniture to discourage children from interfering with each other. A block area that is arranged as an interest area, with one space only for exiting and entering, is a safe place to build a structure.

Other factors to think about in arranging a two to five year old classroom include:

1. What kind of floor covering to use?
2. What kind of work and play surfaces work best?
3. How can we make the best use of wall space?

Floor Covering

Floor covering is an important consideration in designing a preschool setting. A low pile carpet is great for most of the classroom, but a linoleum type floor covering is best for the "messy activity" areas. The sink area, snack area, art corner and science area should be set over a linoleum floor covering or any such covering which allows quick, easy, clean up. Smaller pieces of carpet can be used to define specific playing areas, where a child can take an activity and be on his own private "island."

Work & Play Surfaces

Thought should be given to open space areas (versus tables) near display units. Some activities are worked better at tables than on the floor and vice-versa. Table work is often approached more seriously by children and should be encouraged with activities requiring concentration and problem solving. To direct traffic to tables or floor space, simply place a table close to shelves displaying table work activities and leave open floor space near other activities. Don't be too concerned about separating table from floor activities. Children will often make these distinctions according to their own set of rules. Keep in mind that good use of space allows 35 square feet of unencumbered space per child.

Wall Decor

In most classrooms wall space is at a premium. Walls are taken up by a sink, by doors, by windows, by shelves and by storage units. This means that all available display wall space has to be used wisely.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Make sure that you have posted all items required by the licensing bureau. They are likely to include:
   a. Your license
   b. A fire escape plan
   c. Emergency telephone numbers
   d. A daily schedule
2. A high priority in using wall space is to demonstrate children's products. Make sure that the products are hung at the child's eye level.
3. Teacher-made bulletins or wall displays are a nice extra but should not become too elaborate. If your classroom is divided into interest centers, tie in the wall decoration with the purpose of the

interest center. (The housekeeping wall could have a mock-window with an outdoor scene.)

4. Photos of the children should be displayed.

FROM THE DRAWING BOARD TO THE CLASSROOM

Whether you are arranging a classroom for the first time or simply rearranging, begin your task with a paper and pencil. (It is much easier to erase a line than to move a piano.)

1. Draw the outline of your room putting in doors, windows, fixed furniture or partitions, electric outlets, sink, closets, etc.
2. Using circles, lay out your classroom areas remembering to:
   a. Put art activities on a non-carpeted floor near the sink.
   b. Put the music center or any interest center requiring electrical power near an electric outlet.
   c. Separate quiet and noisy areas.
3. Walk through your classroom with your fingers. Is there any problem with traffic flow?
4. Make an inventory of materials to go in each interest area. Are the areas the right size?
5. Put down the paper and move the furniture.

Developing Interest Centers

As we described the needs of preschool children, we talked about the development of interest centers. The advantage of developing interest centers in a classroom is that children's needs can be met in a flexible way. All children are not required to do the same thing at the same time.

The number of interest centers you will want to set up in your classroom depends upon several factors.

1. How much space do you have?
2. How much equipment do you have?
3. What is your staffing plan?
4. What type of daily schedule works best for you?

If you have a small classroom with only one teacher it is better to limit yourself to a few interest centers. Also, if you have a short day or if activities are scheduled outside your classroom, you may limit yourself to three or four functional centers that meet a variety of needs.

On the following pages we are including suggestions for the design of four interest centers.

These center suggestions are taken from *Nuts and Bolts*, by Marilyn Segal and Leonard Tomasello (Humanics Inc., 1980).

Some Other Things Your Classroom Will Need

1. For Health and Safety

A place for toothbrushes and drinking cups
A fire extinguisher
A place to post fire evacuation plan
A place to keep health records and emergency numbers
A place for tissues and paper toweling
Waste paper baskets
An out-of-reach place for cleaning products

2. For Personal Possessions

A special "cubby" for each child
A place for you to keep plans, records and personal items

3. A place for cots, mats and blankets

4. A drinking fountain at children's height

PLAY AND LEARN CENTER

Type of Space

Relatively quiet—carpeted—shelving for materials (small table and chairs are optional)

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	RATIONALE	MATERIALS NEEDED	
READING AND WRITING READINESS	•Develop visual skills related to reading •Learn to work alone and complete a task •Develop listening skills related to reading •Develop an appreciation for stories and pictures	**Reading Readiness** *Visual Skills:* Inset puzzles, beads, string and pattern matching cards, picture dominoes, lotto games, block design sets, sequence puzzles. *Auditory Skills:* Rhyming cards, letter sound games. *Learning Alphabet:* Tactile letter board, alphabet puzzles, alphabet cards, magnetic letter board.	**Writing Readiness** *Small Muscle Development:* Wooden tool working sets, sewing cards, lacing shoes, geo-form boards, dressing frames, lock box, writing utensils, templates, stencils, slate and chalk, pencils, paper and crayons. **Appreciation of Stories and Pictures** Camera and film, collection of books, pictures, posters, talking books, film strips, quiet corner with rocking chair or pillow.
NUMBER READINESS	•Develop concepts of number and sets that prepare the child for learning mathematics. •Help child make discriminations on the basis of shape, size and weight. •Introduce basic numerical concepts relating to measurement and equality.	**Counting** Cubes, buttons, counting frame, abacus, bead-o-graph, color and count sorting box combination, Montessori beads. **Learning Sets and Numerals** Number cards, peg numbers, unifix cubes, magnetic numerals and board, dominoes.	**Learning about Shape and Size** Geometric shapes, fit-a-square set, fit-a-circle set, nesting toys, stacking squares, Montessori cylinders, pink tower, long stair, broad stair. **Learning about Measurement, Time and Money** Balance scale, play money, see-through clock, yard stick, rulers, tape measure, nested measurement cups and rice weight tablets.
LANGUAGE AND CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT	•To increase vocabulary •To learn classification skills •To learn about patterns and relationships •To develop problem solving skills	**Vocabulary Development** Picture cards, occupation match-up cards, lotto games, classification skills, category cards, touch and match sets, feel tablets, color board, color tablet.	**Pattern Relationship** Space relationship cards, play tile sets, parquetry blocks, peg boards. **Problem Solving Skills** What's missing puzzles, attribute blocks

MOVE AND GROW CENTER

Type of Space

Large and open—relatively noisy. Carpeted, storage space of large equipment—and shelving for rhythm instruments. Place for piano and record player.

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	RATIONALE	MATERIALS NEEDED
GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITY AREA	•Develop large muscle skills •Provide an outlet for energy •Provide opportunities for group play	Tumbling mat, walking board, balance beam, hop scotch or number line, skipping rope, bean bags, large sit-on trucks, train.
MUSIC AREA	•Develop an appreciation of music •Improve coordination and rhythm •Develop listening skills •Provide opportunities for self expression	Piano, rhythm instruments, phonograph, records, scarves.
CIRCLE ACTIVITY AREA	•Provide a place for opening and closing activities •Develop language and listening skills •Provide opportunities for participating in large group activities.	Carpet squares for each child to define individual spaces, projector and film strips, peg or flannel board for language activities, weather charts, picture roll calls, birthday charts.

IMAGINATIVE PLAY CENTER

Type of Space

Semi-enclosed-carpeted, shelving for play materials, place for mirror, clothes rack and play structure (2-story house)

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	RATIONALE	MATERIALS NEEDED	
LET'S PRETEND AREA	•Consolidating experiences •Expressing good and bad feelings •Developing discourse skills	**Doll Play** Dolls, doll bed, carriage, high chair, dresser, blanket, clothes, bath, diaper set, feeding set, bibs, changing table, toilet articles. **Kitchen Play** Telephone, stoves, sink, refrigerator, small table and chairs, dishes, silverware, pots and pans, table cloth, placemat, pot holders, oven mitt, baking utensils, toaster, mixer, play food, boxes, shopping cart, dish towel, sponges, scrub brush, dish rack. **Cleaning and Housekeeping** Brooms, mops, dust pan, carpet-sweeper, scrub brush, feather duster.	**Theme Play Materials** (Do not introduce more than one theme play set at a time.) **Store** Cash register, balance scale, paper bags, play money, stamps, empty cans, boxes. **Doctor/Nurse** Stethoscope, thermometer, throat sticks, band-aid box, sling, diploma, eye chart, blood pressure cuff, flashlight, doctor and nurses uniforms, otoscope, hammer, medicine bottles, spoon, prescription pad, pencil, bag, syringe.
DRESS UP AREA	•Practice role-playing •Build self-confidence •Provide practice in dressing and undressing	*Hats:* ladies dress hats, men's caps, cowboy hats, firemen and police hats, masks. *Clothes:* men's shirts, ladies dresses, capes, shawls, scarves, robes.	*Footwear:* high-heel shoes, slippers, boots, men's shoes. Mirror, purses, wallets, keys, 'credit cards', suitcases, clothes racks.
BLOCK BUILDING AREA	•Encourage creativity •Promote cooperation •Develop numerical concepts •Improve small muscle development •Promote language	Kindergarten blocks, large Lego sets, Bristle blocks, giant dominoes, farm fences, small vehicles, people, zoo and farm animals.	

CREATE AND DISCOVER

Type of Space

Large, noisy, uncarpeted, sink, tables and chairs, shelving for craft materials, table for science display, sand and water tables, hot plate.

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	RATIONALE	MATERIALS NEEDED	
SCIENCE AREA	•Encourage children to ask questions •Help children use their senses for investigation •Provide opportunities for discovering •Develop problem solving skills •Develop nurturance and responsibility	**Sorting and Classifying** Rocks, shells, beans, nuts, seeds, small containers, magnifying glass, mystery boxes. **Encouraging Investigation** Water table with sieves, baster, funnels, pitchers, bottles, measuring cups, egg beater, sand table, sifter, different shaped containers, scoops, rocks, shovels, spoons, magnets and iron filings, sink and float tub.	**Sharpening the Senses** Kaleidoscope, color paddles, sounds and smells containers, prisms, touch beads. **Growing Center** Pots, seeds, shovels, ruler. **Pet Center** Goldfish, hamster, ant farm, guinea pig.
COOKING AREA	•Provide opportunities to use all the senses •Learn about food and nutrition •Develop small muscle coordination •Stimulate language and concept development •Help children follow directions	Heat Source—stove, hot plates or electric pans. Refrigerator and sink (ideal but not essential). Table and chairs, pots and pans,	cooking utensils, recipe board, chef hat and smocks, cleaning materials, food and recipes.
ARTS AND CRAFTS AREA	•Encourage exploration in a variety of media •Develop artistic sense •Encourage exploration with materials •Develop a sense of personal accomplishment	**Painting** Easels, brushes, paper, rollers, paints, drying rack **Crafts** Clay, scissors, scrap materials, paste, tape, wallpaper, books, magic markers, crayons, colored tissues, cookie cutters, pipe cleaners,	pad and ink sets, sponges, screen, tooth brushes. **Weaving** Loom, wool.

SCENE IV

SETTING UP A PLAYGROUND

Although the amount of time devoted to outdoor play is dependent both on the age of the children and the weather conditions, every child care center should provide opportunities for children to spend part of the day outdoors.

MUSTS for the outdoor play area include:

1. *Forty-five square feet of space for every child over two years.*
2. *A five-foot fence that completely encloses the play area with child-proof latches on the exits.*
3. *Adequate shade.*
4. *Safe play equipment.*
5. *Adequate space between the play equipment.*
6. *Soft surfaces under the climbing structures.*

Play Area for Infants and Toddlers

Infants enjoy spending a part of the day outdoors. They can be placed in carriages, strollers, walkers, baby swings or oversized playpens. Toddlers love the opportunity to play outside. Outdoor play provides a chance to release energy, initiate games, practice emerging motor skills and social exchanges with other youngsters. A toddler play area should include the following types of play opportunity.

Wheel Toy Section

Wheel toy play is particularly desirable for toddlers because it combines opportunities to practice motor skills with opportunities for pretending.

A wheel toy area works best where there is a circular path that children can ride around. It also is an excellent idea to include a "service station" where wheel toys can be washed, oiled and filled with gas.

Climbing Structures

Climbing structures for toddlers should take into account the fact that toddlers may not be fully aware of their own capabilities and limitations. In selecting toddler structures we cannot assume that the child's natural fear will keep her out of danger. A toddler who is learning to climb may climb to the top of a structure without concern about getting back down again. Make sure, therefore, that the height and construction of a structure minimizes the danger of a fall. Also, make sure that climbing structures are placed on a soft surface. Eight inches of sand is ideal.

Many climbing structures have swing sets attached. In general this is not a good idea. If the swing set is used in the toddler area it should be a reasonable distance from other structures. Toddlers do not recognize the danger of running behind a swing.

Sand Boxes

Although toddlers enjoy playing and digging in a sand box, there are some problems with sand boxes that require special supervision.

1. Toddlers are likely to throw sand in each others eyes or take a bite of their sand-cakes.
2. It's difficult to convince toddlers to keep sand inside the sand box.
3. Sand boxes can be breeding grounds for pinworms.
4. Sand boxes must be covered when not in use.

Despite these disadvantages sand boxes provide young children marvelous opportunities to fill and empty, to sieve, to pour, to experiment with and pretend. If you do have enough staff to maintain a sand box, it deserves a place on the toddler playground.

Play Area for Children 2 1/2 Through 5 Years

In designing playgrounds for children between 2 1/2 and 5 years old we should consider the kinds of play that these children will engage in. The three kinds of play which these children enjoy are play for mastery, construction play and representational play.

Play for Mastery

Because of space and noise tolerance, the playground is the most logical place for gross motor activity. As children run, climb, swing and balance they are learning to control their bodies, to understand spatial relationships and to master a host of important motor skills.

The following structures and equipment can foster motor skill development:

Structures and Ground Cover

Jungle gyms
Slides
Trampolines
Swings
Tunnels
See-saws
Log Walks
Basketball hoops
Swinging gates
Balance beams

Equipment

Balls
Hoops
Tricycles
Wagons
Riding Toys
Kerbabs
Doll prams & strollers

Construction Play

A second type of outdoor play that children enjoy is construction, where children experiment and create with different media. Construction play can take place with liquid, semi-liquid or solid materials. The following structures and materials can be used creatively in many construction play activities.

For creating and exploring with liquid or semi-liquid materials:

1. Water tables
2. Sand boxes
3. Clay-soil digging areas

For creating and constructing with solid materials:

1. Large hollow blocks
2. Cardboard cartons
3. Planks
4. Milk cartons
5. Crates

Representational Play

A third type of play that occurs on the playground is representational. This play parallels the imaginative play of the indoor environment. Children vent frustrations, express feelings and work out problems as well as engage in social interaction with other children (perhaps even more so in this wide-open environment). Although children will use the climbing structures and the constructive materials for imaginative play, their pretending can be enhanced by inclusion of some key props.

Climbing Area

1. Steering wheel on a "car."
2. Telephone
3. Row of Stumps (for seats of a train or bus)

Sandbox

1. Cars, trucks and boats (various sizes)
2. Rubber animals, people
3. Empty containers
4. Shovels
5. Kitchen utensils, pots, pans

Water Play

1. Empty containers
2. Baby dolls with soap
3. Diapers, clean clothes, blanket
4. Objects that float/sink

Gasoline Stations

1. Large oil cans with rubber hoses
2. Toy tools to repair cars
3. Money box with plastic coins to pay for gas

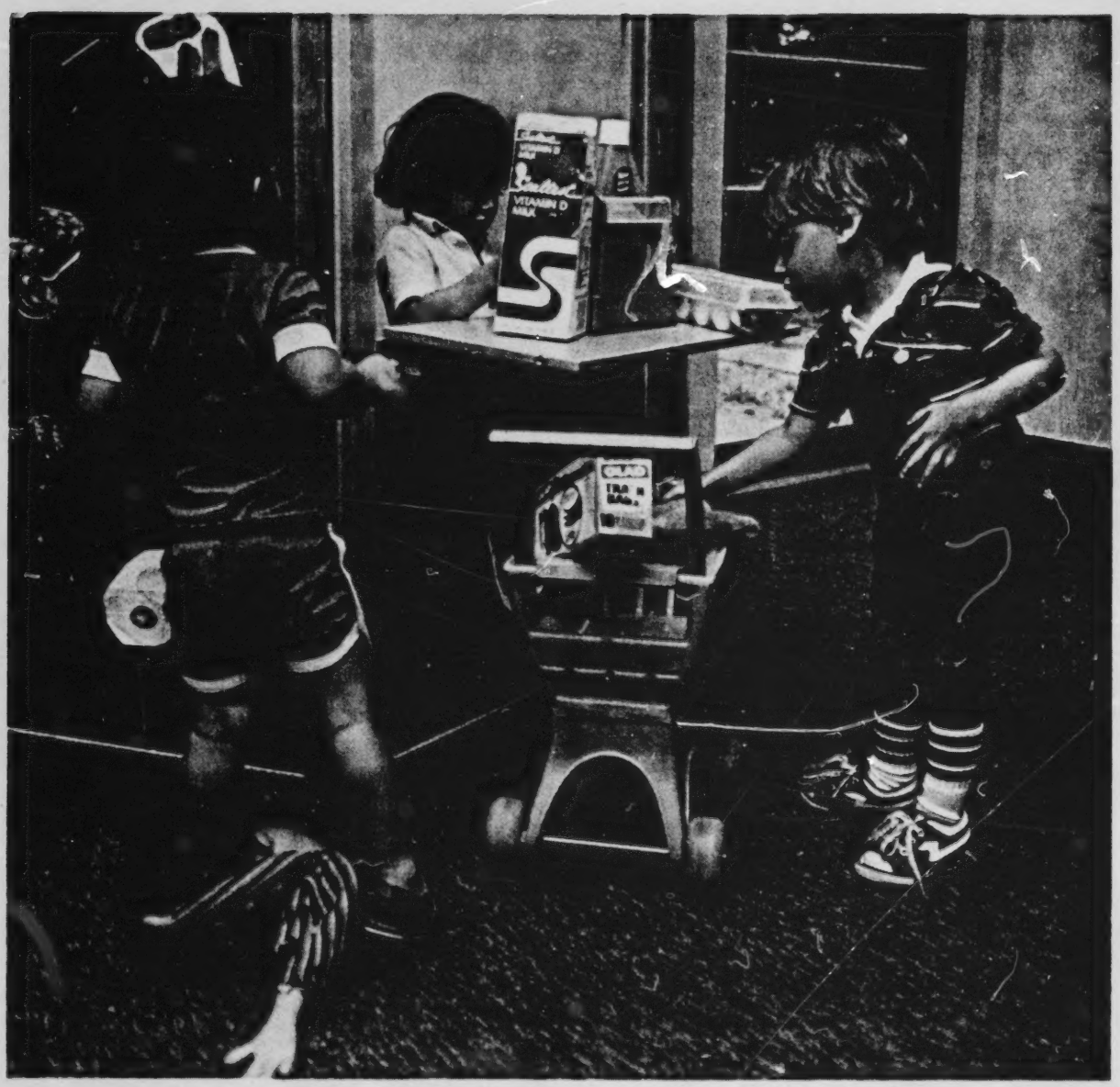
Play House

Children love child-size space. A well equipped playground for young children should include a play house with a telephone and a shed that can be used for both imaginative play and storage.

Because eating is so important to young children, pretend routines often revolve around this activity. A picnic table with tableware is an excellent playhouse prop for encouraging pretending.

Safety Musts

The playground area should be completely fenced in with locked exits. Barriers to younger, inexperienced children should also be placed around dangerous climbing structures, reserving them for only those children who are capable of getting around the barriers. Slides should be railed on tops and sides to prevent falls. Swings should be anchored well into the ground and placed in an area isolated from other playground traffic, but easily supervised. Soft seats are very important since you will inevitably encounter a swing-walker or two. No open S-hooks should be used with swings or other structures, since they pose a dangerous hazard. Climbing structures should be placed on a soft surface.



ACT III

FIRST PERFORMANCES

SCENE I

PROGRAMS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Planning an Effective Program for Infants

A Short Story

Wanda was beginning her first day as an aide at a day care center for children three months to five years. Mrs. Smith, the director, called Wanda to her office to discuss her job responsibilities. "What age group do you feel you would be the most comfortable with?", asked Mrs. Smith. "Well," Wanda replied, "I really love children. I want to work with them, to help them learn new things. So any group besides the infants would be fine. I don't want to be just a diaperer and a feeder. I want to work with a group who can really do something."

Wanda is just not very knowledgeable about infants. If she had watched an infant closely she would have been surprised at the many feats the infant could accomplish. We no longer view babies as sweet little bundles to be held, rocked, fed, changed and then laid down to rest. Infants are, in fact, young learners. Like busy scientists they take in information about the world, perform experiments and test out their ideas. Through this process they make many discoveries. They discover that they have bodies with arms, hands, feet and legs. They discover that people are useful, that language is important and that an object that is hidden from sight exists even though it cannot be seen. In fact many behavioral scientists feel that the foundations for all later development, physical, psychological and social are established within the first year of life. This means that what we do with babies is important. The kinds of experiences we give infants can have a lifelong influence.

How then do we plan for infants? What kinds of things can we do with babies that will contribute to a child's social, emotional and intellectual development? The first important factor is to understand the infant with whom we are working. Infants need experiences that are geared to their developmental level. If a baby is in the process of learning to reach, we must give her lots of reaching opportunities. If she is learning to imitate simple actions, we should become effective models for her. Let's take a look first at babies of different ages so we will know what to expect.

Birth to Three Months

Overview. Even during the first months of life infants respond with enthusiasm to circumstances specifically designed to meet their rapidly changing abilities. The newborn infant can already suck, swallow, look, hear, taste, smell, feel, turn her head and signal for help. She is attracted by soft light, high pitched voices, faces and shapes. The newborn baby sleeps a great deal and her behavior is primarily governed by reflexes. During the early months babies learn to respond more and more to environmental circumstances. Reflexes become more efficient and better coordinated. The baby learns to follow objects with her eyes, to grasp a rattle placed in her hand and bring it to her mouth and to turn her head to find the source of sound. She learns to recognize her caregiver's face and voice. Her body becomes more relaxed. She learns to hold her hands open. Her head control improves and her kicking becomes more rhythmical.

Our goals and activities during these early months are designed to help the infant develop her emerging capacities. We help her to focus her eyes and follow moving targets. We encourage the baby to listen and respond to different sounds. We provide special exercises to help infants relax and gain muscle tone. An alert caregiver recognizes the infant's needs. There is a time when the infant needs stimulation and a time when soothing is more appropriate. We try to recognize and respond to the baby's rhythm, to adjust our activities and routines to each infant's individual needs.

Three to Six Months

Overview. During these next three months infants become more responsive and less irritable. Their interest in environmental exploration increases. Important developments during this time include social smiling, hand regard, hand play, the gradual development of increasingly precise reaching skills, interest in playing with toys, rolling over and, by the end of the sixth month, progress in learning to sit. This is an important time for face to face interaction between the infant and the caregiver. The infant is very interested in learning "conversational skills." With appropriate experience he will learn to draw the caregiver into an interaction, to "coo" back and forth taking turns with his partner, and to imitate simple cooing sounds.

Activities during this period are designed to help infants improve their reaching skills and their ability to explore and manipulate toys. Exercises to strengthen arms, legs, back, stomach and neck are important because they help prepare infants for learning to sit and to crawl. Language and "cooing" games are suggested to encourage infants to make new sounds and to engage in social interaction.

Six to Nine Months

Overview. By this time the baby has begun to use a pincer grasp, to drop things on purpose and then look for them, to bang objects on a hard surface and to transfer things from hand to hand. He is beginning to have a crude notion of object permanence (something continues to exist even though we can't see it) and can imitate simple actions (like banging) that he has already learned. In the next three months the infant's notions about objects will become more sophisticated and, by the end of the ninth month, he will begin to look for hidden objects. The infant will add many more sounds to his vocabulary and will begin babbling (mamma, dadda, babba). He will start to respond to a few specific words like his name or "Hi" and may begin to show a fear of strangers. During this time period most babies prefer sitting up and they begin to use some method of crawling. The pincer grasp is now used successfully to pick up small objects and finger foods. The baby can drink from a cup with help and will hold his own bottle.

Activities during this period are designed to help infants become more sophisticated in their ability to manipulate objects. We provide the infant with a variety of toys that are different in shape, size, texture and in the sounds they make. How many different things will the infant do with a toy? Does he know that a soft rubber toy is for squeaking and a rattle is for shaking? Do his hands work together when he plays with a toy? As we give infants experience with finger foods, we help to refine their pincer grasps. We suggest dropping games as an aid in learning releasing skills. During this period, the infant is learning to recognize the patterns and rhythms of language. We introduce songs and nursery rhymes to give infants exposure to the special qualities of language.

Nine to Twelve Months

Overview. This is a time when we see many rapid developments. The baby understands more and more specific words, such as "mommy", "no", "bottle", etc. He becomes interested in looking at books and may start pointing to specific objects. The baby's babbling starts to sound more and more like true speech and some babies, during this time, will start saying words. The baby's imitative skills improve and she begins to imitate new actions. The infant learns to wave bye-bye and play pat-a-cake. At first these gestures are imitative, caregiver waves and baby waves. But after a while the baby responds to the verbal command. The baby may also learn to imitate a simple social action like "making nice" to a doll and putting a hat on his own head.

His interest in objects shifts from simple manipulation to performing tasks with the objects, like dropping them into a container, throwing or rolling. He learns to use a new method of exploration, poking with a finger, and will begin to actively explore objects within his reach.

The baby is now really on the go. He creeps quickly on all fours, pulls himself to a standing position and cruises sideways along the furniture. Many babies learn to walk before their first birthday.

Activities during the 9-12 month period are designed to teach understanding of specific words, to encourage the development of object permanence and to help infants learn to imitate simple actions. We also work on simple self-help skills and on providing opportunities for infants to explore their rapidly developing motor capacities.

Planning Activities

It is important for caregivers to be knowledgeable about infant development so that they can present infants with new challenges that will stimulate their growth and learning. The infant's caregiver plays many roles. She is responsible for:

1. Knowing the infant's physical needs and meeting them promptly and efficiently.

2. Being a source of comfort to babies who are distressed.

3. Setting up a learning environment for the infant by providing appropriate toys and experiences.

4. Acting as a "consultant" by helping the baby when she is "stuck" and in need of assistance.

5. Playing games, talking and singing songs with the infant.

There are many games and activities that are good for babies of all ages. What babies learn, however, depends on their developmental level. For example, "The Wheels on the Bus" is a traditional preschool song, enjoyed by most children. For the three year old it is a challenge to learn to sing all the words and, at the same time, carry out the appropriate actions. But the song can also be used very effectively with infants. Let's look at how we can modify the song for babies at different ages and consider what they can learn from it. For babies from 3-6 months the song can be used as an exercise song and an opportunity for face to face social interaction. The baby is laid down on his back and the caregiver leans over him. She sings the song and, as she does, puts the baby through the following motions:

The wheels on the bus go round and around, round and around, round and around. The wheels on the bus go round and around, all over town.
(caregiver moves baby's arms in a circular motion)

The people on the bus go up and down, etc.
(caregiver moves baby's arms over his head and then back down)

The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish, etc.
(caregiver takes baby's legs, bends them slightly and rolls baby from side to side)

The ride on the bus goes bump, bump, bump, etc.
(caregiver places hands under the baby's knees, lifts him slightly and gently bumps him up and down)

The children on the bus go yak, yak, yak, etc.
(caregiver moves legs in bicycle fashion in time to the yak, yak, yak)

For babies 6-12 months the song can be sung while they are seated on the caregiver's lap, directly in front of her. Again the babies can be put through some of the motions, moving and bouncing in time to the music. This is an opportunity for the baby to begin to understand language and to link the words in the song with the motions that are made. This type of activity is perfect to provide an opportunity to learn to anticipate what will come next. For example, "the ride on the bus goes bump, bump, bump" is accompanied by the caregiver bouncing the baby up and down on her knee. Does the baby anticipate this by laughing before the bumping is started, or by bouncing on her own?

With careful observations and an understanding of the developmental process caregivers can adapt activities to each baby's individual level. There are activities, as we mentioned, that are good for babies of all ages. Other activities are particularly geared to specific stages of development. Let's look first at the activities designed for specific ages. We have divided them into 3 categories:

1. activities to encourage language and imitation
2. activities to encourage problem solving
3. activities to encourage motor development

We have categorized activities according to age. Although this should serve as a convenient guide, it must be remembered that infants develop at different rates and caregivers will have to be aware of each infant's individual needs.

Activities to Encourage Language and Imitation

There are many specific activities that can help infants develop an understanding of language and encourage communication. We also work on activities that foster imitative skill development so that children will learn through watching others.

Language learning is not confined to just special times or special activities. Language is a part of our daily experience. We provide opportunities for the infant to hear language as part of all daily routines, diapering, rocking, feeding, as well as playing. Whenever we are with an infant we try to talk, to describe what is happening, what we are doing, and what she is doing. Our speech is slowed and simplified and we vary our pitch and level.

Birth to Three Months

•*Talking with baby:* Talk softly to the baby as you hold or feed him.

•*Sing a lullaby:* Sing a lullaby as you put the infant to sleep.

Three to Six Months

•*Face to face interaction:* Hold baby directly in front of you. Talk to him and encourage him to coo back. Talk—pause—talk—pause. Try making the same cooing sounds as the baby.

•*Picture show:* Let the infant explore and touch large pictures. Label objects.

Six to Nine Months

•*Let's babble:* Make some of the sounds you know the baby can make and see if he will imitate you.

•*Imitating banging:* Begin banging with your hands on a hard surface and see if the infant will bang with you. When he does, say "bang, bang, bang". Once the infant has mastered this activity see if he will imitate you when you bang with a spoon.

•*Clapping:* Clap your hands and encourage the infant to clap his. Once he can imitate clapping see if he will clap when he's given the verbal command.

•*Waving:* Substitute waving for clapping in the above activity.

•*Body parts:* Use a large doll with clear features. Show baby how to point to the eyes, ears, nose, mouth. Next, teach him to point to his own body.

•*Blowing:* Blow on baby's tummy. Show him how to blow.

•*Smelling:* Show the infant how to smell a flower.

Nine to Twelve Months

•*Object grab:* Place two objects in front of the baby. Say "Show me the shoe", "Show me the plate". Later add more objects.

•*Look at a picture book:* Ask the infant to point to specific pictures.

•*Songs, Chants, and Nursery Rhymes:* Songs, nursery rhymes, and chants give infants the opportunity to hear language. Repetition at this age is important and special songs help the infant become more aware of the rhythms, patterns and inflections associated with speech. At the end of this chapter songs and chants enjoyed by infants and toddlers of all ages are listed.

Music for Babies

Babies enjoy all different kinds of music. Music can set moods. Play soothing lullabies during sleeping or feeding times. Put on a disco beat and let the babies dance. Play children's songs and encourage all the infants to shake a rattle or musical instrument to the music. Put on a marching beat and bang the drums (a drum made out of an oatmeal box or coffee can works just as well) or march in a circle.

A selection of music activities, appropriate for infants, is listed in Scene II—Curriculum for Toddlers.

Activities to Encourage Problem Solving Skills

Birth to Three Months

•*Visual regard:* Hold a brightly colored object in front of the infant and see if he can focus his eyes on it.

•*Visual tracking:* Hold a flashlight 12" in front of infant, slowly moving it from side to side. When the

infant has mastered this, move the flashlight vertically and then in a circle

•*Grasping:* Place a small article in the baby's hand and allow him to grasp it. Switch hands.

•*Looking for source of sound:* Shake bell or rattle behind and above the child's head. Give him time to turn his head.

Three to Six Months

•*Rattle shake:* Give the infant a rattle and show him how to shake it to make a sound.

•*Wristband:* Make a wristband for the baby to help him "discover" his hands.

•*Banging:* Give infant a rattle to bang on a hard surface.

•*Reaching activities:* Give the infant lots of opportunities to reach. Hold out objects, dangle objects on ribbons, put a cradle gym within the infant's reach.

•*Kicking activities:* Place the cradle gym near the baby's feet so he can make it move by kicking.

•*Peek a boo:* Play a peek a boo game with baby.

•*Toy manipulation:* Give infant a soft squeak toy.

Six to Nine Months

•*Squeaks:* Show infant how to make the squeak toy work.

•*Pulling activities 1:* Give the infant a jumping jack, scarecrow, or other similar toy.

•*Pulling activity 2:* Give the baby a pull toy or tie a string to one of his favorite toys. Show her how to pull the string to get a toy.

•*Batting:* Give infant a roly-poly clown toy to bat back and forth.

•*Hidden object:* Partially hide a favorite toy and see if the infant can find it.

•*Bell ringing:* Give infant a bell to ring.

•*Block tower:* Build a block tower and let baby knock it down.

Nine to Twelve Months

•*Dropping games:* Give the infant objects to drop into different size containers. Once the infant has mastered this, cut a round hole in the plastic lid of a coffee can and show the infant how to drop the ball through a hole.

•*Roll:* Play a rolling game with the infant. Say "I roll the ball to baby and she rolls it back to me."

•*Busy board:* Give the infant a busy board, a driving board, or a busy cube.

•*Hidden object game:* Hide toy under a small cloth and let the infant retrieve it. Next use two and then three cloths. Try hiding the object in the infant's clothes and inside boxes.

•*Emptying game:* Fill a box with interesting objects. Let infant empty the objects from container.

Activities to Encourage Motor and Self-Help Skills

Birth to Three Months

•*Massage:* Gently massage the baby's arms, legs and body.

•*Vary positions:* Make sure the infant is sometimes placed on his back, sometimes on his stomach. At times the infant can be propped up in an infant seat.

•*Turning over:* Help the infant learn to turn over by rolling him back and forth. Bend one knee and arm and gently roll.

•*Kicks:* Place a cradle gym over the infant's feet to encourage the development of reciprocal kicking.

•*Reaching out:* Place baby on stomach and hold a toy a few inches in front of him to encourage stretching.

Six to Nine Months

•*Come and get it:* Hold a toy in front of the infant and encourage him to retrieve it. Make sure the infant is allowed to be successful. To help children get started crawling let them push with their feet against your cupped hands.

•*Sitting up:* Make sure infant spends time sitting up, even if he has to be propped by pillows.

•*Finger food:* Help infants develop pincer grasp by offering finger foods like Cheerios, peas and raisins.

Nine to Twelve Months

•*Pulling up:* Make sure there are low shelves or places the infants can use to pull themselves to a standing position.

•Ball games: Roll the ball back and forth. Play retrieval games. Hang the ball on a string and show the child how to bat it.

•*Walking:* Give the beginning walker something that can be pushed and used as a walker. The lion riding toy with raised handle works well.

•*Feeding:* Encourage infants to use a cup and spoon.

•*Tunnel crawl:* Encourage the infants to crawl through a tunnel.

Sensory Activities

There are many sensory activities that can be introduced to young infants and toddlers. Ideas for these activities can be found toward the end of this chapter.

Curriculum for Young Toddlers
The One to Two Year Olds

Although there is no special magic in a baby's first birthday, twelve months old is a transition point in infant development. As the baby goes from creeping to walking, she sees the world from a new perspective. She can see more things, reach more things, and explore more things. Her emerging abilities provide new opportunities for exploration, and at the same time, make her world somewhat more hazardous. It is up to the caregiver now to encourage exploration but, at the same time, to protect the toddler from the hazards of her widening horizons.

Knowing What to Expect

Twelve to Twenty-four Months

Between 12 and 24 months, babies develop at greatly varying rates. Each baby seems to have her own special strengths. Some babies are very social; they like to "talk" and interact a great deal. Others are more interested in their toys. Some babies are concentrating on learning to talk and are not in such a great hurry to run or climb. Others never have the time to stop to talk. They are always on the move, running, climbing and manipulating.

During this time period most babies will learn to walk steadily. They will attempt to run and they will begin to walk up and down stairs. Self-help skills will improve. By 24 months the child should be able to use a cup and spoon fairly well and to help in the dressing process by pulling off his socks, raising his arms or picking up his foot so his shoes can be put on.

The child becomes more sophisticated in his play with toys. He knows how to manipulate toys to make interesting things happen, to stack two objects and to roll and throw a ball. His understanding of language expands and, by the end of 18 months, the child understands many new words and directions and points to familiar objects and body parts. At 18 months the child will learn to say approximately 15 words and to make animal sounds.

By 24 months many children have a 200-300 word vocabulary. They are beginning to put two, three and four words together to express an idea or relationship. Only the most important words are used and their grammar is definitely not "proper". "Mommy go store," "I go sleep night," are typical two year old sentences.

Activities during this period are designed to help toddlers expand their understanding and use of language, to help them imitate increasingly complex actions and to help them improve their understanding of objects and object properties. This is the age of push, pull, dump and fill and we must provide children with many opportunities to practice these skills.

Activities to Encourage Language and Imitation

Twelve to Twenty-four Months

•*Picture games:* Play games involving pointing to and labeling specific pictures and objects.

•*Doll games:* Give the infant the doll and the appropriate prop. Ask him to hug the doll, kiss the doll, put the doll to sleep, wipe the doll's nose, rock the doll, feed her and put her in her crib. Show her how to brush the doll's hair and give her a bath.

•*Picture albums:* Make picture albums with pictures of familiar toys, objects, boats and people.

•*Retrieval games:* Send the infant on "errands." Say, "Get the doll," "Bring me the ball," etc.

- *Puppets:* Introduce puppets. Show children how to make them talk.
- *Picture matching games:* Between 20-24 months many children begin to match pictures.
- *Books:* "Read" to the child. Help him point out and label familiar items.
- *Tea party:* Encourage pretend activities that involve setting the table, cooking and washing dishes. Show the child how to pretend to pour coffee, to stir a cake, etc.
- *Drum games:* Show the child how to play rhythms on a drum. A decorated oatmeal carton or coffee can will work very well.
- *Mirror games:* Look in the mirror with the child and help her identify body parts.
- *Hat and bead games:* Give the child a hat or beads to put on and take off.
- *Driving games:* Props can be keys, steering wheels, or riding toys. Talk about where the child is going, what he will do when he gets there, etc.
- *Telephone games:* Encourage two way conversation by talking with the child as he plays with the toy.
- *Nursery rhymes, songs and chants:* Give toddlers many opportunities to participate in music experiences.

Activities to Encourage Problem-Solving Skills

Twelve to Eighteen Months

- *Ball games:* Use a large, bright ball and show the child how to throw and catch.
- *Fill and dump games:* Give child large wooden beads and two containers. Let him drop the beads into the containers, empty the containers and eventually pour from one to another.
- *Uncovering:* Give the child a box with an easily removable lid. Put interesting toys inside to encourage him to open the box.
- *Building:* Give baby several cubes and demonstrate building a tower.
- *Stacking:* Give baby a stacking toy. Let him experiment with putting the rings on the toy.
- *Puzzles:* Give the infant 1 piece inset puzzles with knobs. Label the pieces as the infant removes them.
- *Dressing games:* Give baby opportunities to put a hat and string of beads on and off.
- *Paper tear:* Give infant old magazines to rip.
- *Stick games:* Show infant how to get a toy that is out of reach by using a stick.
- *More hiding games:* Hide small objects in or under containers. First use two and then three containers (a butter dish works well).
- *Scribble:* Let child experiment with a crayon and paper.

Eighteen to Twenty-four Months

- *Pounding games:* Give the child a pounding bench and hammer.
- *Building:* Encourage the child to build a "big tower" with blocks.
- *Stacking:* Stack nesting boxes.
- *Scooping:* Scooping is a good activity at this age.
- *Hiding games:* Hide a toy inside a box. Put the box inside another one.
- *Puzzles:* Introduce one piece inset puzzles, simple form boards and two-four piece puzzles.
- *Wrapping games:* Wrap up a favorite toy and see if the child can unwrap it.
- *Color matches:* Play simple matching games. Paint spools three different colors, and paint circles on a piece of tag board and see if the child can match the spool to the circle.
- *Shape sorters:* Simple shape sorters are excellent at this age.
- *Wind up toys:* Show the child how to wind a simple toy.
- *Peg boards:* Show the child how to put pegs in and out.

Activities to Encourage Motor and Self-Help Skills

Twelve to Twenty-four Months

- *Ball games:* Play throwing and catching games with different size balls. Play basketball using a large wastebasket.

- *Pound a peg:* Give children a pound a peg, or pound a ball toy.
- *Stair climb:* Give child opportunities to climb stairs or ladder.
- *Slide:* Encourage the children to slide down a toddler slide.
- *Riding toys:* Have several different kinds available for the infants.
- *Push and pull toys:* This encourages walking and balance.
- *Tunnel games:* Encourage children to crawl through the tunnel.
- *Self-Help:* Give child hair brush to brush hair, beads and bracelets to put on and take off.
- *Dancing:* Experiment with different kinds of music.
- *Ring around the Rosy:* Play "Ring around the Rosy."
- *Ball batting:* Suspend a beach ball on a string and have the children take turns batting it.
- *Footprint path:* Cut footprints out of linoleum and let the children use them as stepping stones.
- *Table washing:* Give each child a large sponge and let them help clean up.
- *Shoe games:* Give children large shoes so they can practice putting them on and taking them off.

Art Activities for Toddlers

Encourage toddlers to express themselves through a variety of simple art experiences. Some suggestions include:

- *Crayons:* Talk about what the child is drawing. If the child is 20-24 months encourage her to draw circles and lines.

- *Magic markers:* Give the children large sheets of paper.

- *Shaving cream:* Let children spread shaving cream on a plastic coated table top. To make it particularly pretty you can add a few drops of food coloring.

- *Finger paint:* Try non-toxic finger paint or experiment with food. You can use pudding, chocolate syrup, or whipped cream.

- *Brush painting:* Introduce various kinds of painting. Try easel painting using non-toxic paints or have the children paint a mural together. Painting with water only works very well on a chalkboard.

SCENE II

THE INFANT AND TODDLER CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Planning the Day for Infants & Toddlers

Mrs. Davis was looking for a child care center for her six month old baby. She found the Wee Care Center in the telephone book and made an appointment to visit.

Mrs. Carrers: (the child care provider)
"Oh, yes. We have a fine staff here. We feed our babies on demand and keep them dry and clean at all times."

Mrs. Davis:
"That sounds like just what I'm looking for. What sort of activities do you have for the babies when they are awake?"

Mrs. Carrers:
"Activities? I told you already that we feed our babies on demand and keep them clean and dry at all times. Oh, I know you might have read about infant curriculums in some of those fancy books, but you can bet your bottom dollar the people who wrote those books never changed a baby's diaper! If you want to run a real good nursery you sure don't have time for fun and games!"

Although we agree with Mrs. Carrers that top priority must go to feeding babies and keeping them clean, we do not agree with her ideas about fun and games. In a well planned nursery school we can combine good care giving with stimulating activities.

Some Hints for Planning the Day

1. *Routine and Flexibility:* Infants and toddlers need routine to help them establish an understanding of time and space. They also need flexibility. Within a day care setting, it is important to let infants establish their own feeding and sleeping schedules. Older infants will tend to be more flexible and can begin to adjust to the center's schedule. In order to help infants establish a sense of order, it is important to divide the day into different segments and to be consistent. Infants should also be assigned to a specific caregiver so they can establish a relationship with one significant person.

2. *Indoors and Out:* Infants and toddlers need to spend some time each day outside, as long as weather permits. A patio area, covered with linoleum or indoor-outdoor carpet, provides a nice play area. Messy sensory experiences can be conducted outside to minimize clean up. Riding toys, pull and push toys that need space and small climbing structures are appropriate for the twelve to eighteen month group. Infants who are not walking can be placed outdoors on quilts, their toys brought outside.

3. *Quiet and Active:* Balance quiet times (playing soothing music, rocking or reading) with more active periods.

4. *Special Times:* Have special times throughout the day. This might include *sensory activity*—plan to do some special sensory experience. *Movement/music time*—this should be a regularly planned time so that infants are exposed to music each day. *Reading hour*—set aside a quiet time for looking at books and doing language activities to insure this important area is not neglected. *Baby circle*—it's fun to have a time when everyone gets together to sing songs and do exercises.

5. *A suggested schedule:*

8:30- 9:00	Greetings and early morning feedings
9:00- 9:15	Baby circle, plan songs and exercises
9:15-10:45	Special sensory experience
10:45-11:30	Outdoor time
11:30-12:00	Lunch for infants on food

12:00- 2:00 Quiet reading time and nap time
2:00- 2:30 Music time
2:30- 3:30 Free play, individual language and problem solving activities
3:30- 4:30 Outdoor time

Weekly Planning

With infants and toddlers most activities will be individual, but some group times can be planned. Examples of a planning sheet for group activities:

Dates: _____

Activity	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Baby Circle	Hello song Pat-a-cake See-saw Wheels on bus	Hello song Trot-trot to Boston Wheels on bus	Hello song Who has a nose See-saw Pat-a-cake Exercises	Hello song Exercise song See-saw Trot-Trot	Hello song See-saw Pat-a-cake
Sensory Experience	Bubbles	Bubbles	Cornmeal	Cornmeal	Cornmeal
Music	Disco Dance	Disco Dance	Rhythm Band	Rhythm Band	What does baby hear?
Art Experiences For Toddlers	Painting with water	Coloring with crayons	Painting with water	Magic Marker fun	Coloring with crayons

Individual Activity Plans

You can also plan for individual children by listing three to four kinds of activities you will work on this week.

Marcia: Play drop object in container games, show body parts on doll, read books pointing out specific pictures.

John: Work on sit ups, play reaching games, encourage him to kick at hanging objects.

Susan: Work on tracking skills, let her wear a wrist band, play find the bell games to help her connect sound and sight.

Keeping Records

What kinds of records should be kept? We suggest medical records, emergency information, attendance, record of feedings, sleeping and general information.

- *Medical records:* immunizations, illnesses, special medical problems.
- *Emergency information:* parent's phone numbers, numbers of others if parent is not available.
- *Foods or formula babies are allowed:* records of kinds and amounts of foods infants are allowed.
- *Progress records:* If you are working with developmentally delayed children, it is important to keep accurate progress and activity records to insure infants are being worked with at each new developmental step.
- *Feeding and sleeping records:* To insure that each day infants receive the amount of food and sleep they need, keep daily records. This is particularly useful when more than one caregiver is involved with the infant's care.

Forms for Daily Record Keeping

Infant's Name _____ Date _____

Feeding Information		
Time	Type of Food Formula, Juice	Quantity

Sleeping Information		
Time Infant Put to Sleep	Time Awakened	Length of Nap

Parent Information Forms

General Information Sheet

Child's Name _____
Address _____
Phone Number _____
Parent's Names _____
Work Phone Numbers: Mother _____
Father _____
Person to Contact if Parent is unavailable to contact in case of emergency _____
Pediatrician: Name _____
Phone # _____
Hospital Preference _____
Who may pick up your child _____

Sleeping Information

How many naps a day does your child generally take? _____
At what times? _____
How does your child prefer to be put to sleep? _____
_____

Feeding Information

Formula _____
Juices _____
Solid Foods _____
Describe your child's feeding schedule _____
_____

Other Important Information

What else can you tell us about your infant's need, individual preferences, habits and desires that will help us provide better care?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Songs, Nursery Rhymes & Chants Enjoyed by Toddlers & Infants

Pat-a-Cake

Pat a cake
Pat a cake bakers man,
Bake me a cake as fast as you can,
Roll it *(roll it in baby's hands)*, knead it, and
Mark it with a B and put it in the oven for baby and me.

How Big Is Baby?

How big is baby? So big! *(lift up baby's hands)*

Pop Goes the Weasel

All around the mulberry bush the monkey chased the weasel.
The monkey thought it was all in fun, POP goes the weasel.

Row-Row Your Boat

Do sit ups with baby as you sing this song!

Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is but a dream.

Trot Trot to Boston

Trot trot to Boston
Trot trot to Lynn
You better watch out or
you might fall in *(tilt baby backwards and bounce him up)*

Bicycle Baby

(for leg bicycle exercises)

Bicycle, bicycle baby
Bicycle, Bicycle girl (or boy)

The Wheels on the Bus

The wheels on the bus go round and around, round and around, round and around,
The wheels on the bus go round and around all through the town *(go in a circle)*

The people on the bus go up and down *(go up and down)*

The doors on the bus go open and shut *(arms go out and in)*

The ride on the bus goes bump, bump, bump *(bounce baby)*

The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish *(arms go back and forth)*

The children on the bus go yak, yak, yak *(fingers go open and shut)*

The babies on the bus go wa, wa, wa *(pretend to cry)*

The mommies on the bus go sh, sh, sh *(put finger to lips)*

Two Little Blackbirds

Two little blackbirds sitting on the hill
One was named Jack, the other was named Jill
Fly away Jack, fly away Jill
Come back Jack, come back Jill

See Saw

See saw up and down *(child's name)*'s going to town.
See saw side to side *(child's name)*'s going for a ride.
See saw bumpity bump *(child's name)*'s getting ready to jump.

Tickling Rhymes

Hickory Dickory Dock

Hickory, dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one, the mouse ran down.
Hickory, dickory dock...tick, tock

This Little Piggy

This little piggy went to market,
This little piggy went home,
This little piggy had roast beef,
This little piggy had none.
And this little piggy ran all the way home.

Roughhousing Song

Airplane song

I'm a little airplane
watch me fly
flying, flying to the sky

Self-Awareness Songs

Songs with Baby's Name (help baby become aware of his own names)

My name is _____ yes indeed, yes indeed, yes indeed,
My name is _____ yes indeed, yes indeed, my darling.

You Take Your Little Hands

You take your little hands and go clap, clap, clap,
Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap.
You take your little hands and go
Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap your hands.
(Substitute arms waves, feet stamp, tummy-tickle, etc.)

Who Has a Nose? (Body part song)

Who has a nose? I have a nose.
Who has toes? I have toes.
Who has lots of fingers? I have lots of fingers.
Now we know. Now we know.

Who can wiggle their nose? I can wiggle my nose.
Who can wiggle their toes? I can wiggle my toes.
Who can shake their fingers? I can shake my fingers.
Now we know. Now we know.

Sensory Activities Enjoyed by Infants & Toddlers

•*Texture Rub:* Get swatches of different textured material. Let babies handle the material. Play a tickling game where you rub the material on different parts of the infant's body.

•*Bubbles:* Blow bubbles for the infants. The younger babies can watch them move. Older babies can reach for, grasp and finally run after them.

•*Cornmeal Play:* Put some cornmeal out in a large low basin. Encourage the babies to touch, feel and play in it. Later, add a variety of implements—spoons for scooping, cups for pouring, etc.

•*Spaghetti Pull:* This is an excellent activity for developing fine motor skills. Place a tray of wet spaghetti in front of the babies and let them have fun.

•*Water Play:* Babies love water. On a warm day the babies can splash outside in a baby pool. Indoors the infants can splash in a basin of water placed on the floor. Give them different implements for pouring. To make it more fun, color the water as a special treat.

•*Cotton Candy Surprise:* Cotton candy can be fun. It has an interesting texture. It is soft and fluffy, can be pulled apart, and it melts in the mouth.

•*Sand Play:* Clean sand can provide older babies with hours of fun.

•*Colored Acetate Fun:* Give each infant pieces of colored acetate and play a peek-a-boo game.

•*Baby Massage and Baby Exercise:* A massage for a baby heightens body awareness and can relax a tense child. It is fun to do massage with baby lotion, but it is not necessary. To learn more about infant massage consult the book, *Baby Massage*. Baby exercising improves muscle tone and is fun for infant and caregiver. *The Baby Exercise Book* offers a whole exercise program for infants from birth to eighteen months.

Toys for Infants & Toddlers

Selecting Toys

Look for infant toys that are well made, colorful and washable. Make sure there are no small parts that can come off.

•*Rattles:* Have a variety available. Look for rattles with faces or mirrors. For small infants, search for tiny rattles with very small grips.

•*Squeak toys:* Various sizes—soft animals are popular.

•*Balls:* Various sizes—make sure they are not foam and that they are light.

•*Nesting and stacking toys:* Large nesting boxes, small cups that nest and stack (can double as water toys).

•*Washable dolls:* Look for soft dolls with clear eyes, nose and mouth. Don't get rolling eyes (they rust). Make sure dolls are not too large.

•*Busy boxes:* Check to make sure parts are not too difficult for infants to maneuver.

•*Busy bath:* This is a very enjoyable activity.

•*Mobiles:* Musical mobiles serve a dual purpose. When buying a mobile, consider how it will look from the infant's point of view.

•*Cradle gyms:* Cradle gyms provide infants with experiences in batting and reaching. Look for cradle gyms with a variety of interesting things to bat at.

•*Non-breakable mirror:* A mirror placed on its side gives crawling infants a full view of themselves.

•*Push toys:* Toddlers enjoy push toys on sticks, like the popcorn popper type or toy vacuums.

•*Pull toys:* Look for brightly colored toys that do interesting things when the child pulls them. Music or noise makers add another interesting dimension.

•*Containers and objects to drop:* Coffee cans covered with contact paper and oatmeal boxes work well. Fisher Price people, wooden shapes, plastic pop beads are great for dropping.

•*Colored plastic baby blocks:* Can be manipulated and stacked.

•*Shape sorters:* Choose simple shape sorters with only three or four shapes.

•*Pop-up toys:* These toys fasten to the side of the crib or to the wall. When the infant pulls the string, he gets a response (either music is played or an object pops up).

•Riding toys: Some have handles that come up high and can be used as walkers. Other favorites include horses, tike bikes and trucks with steering wheels.

•*Large cars and trucks:* Look for molded plastic and avoid sharp metal edges.

•*Push carts:* The toy shopping carts and baby carriages are loved by toddlers who have just mastered walking.

•*Books:* Get books with hard cardboard pages (or make and laminate your own). Start with books with only one item on a page. Pictures of toys, animals, family pets or people are best at the beginning.

•*Animals:* Animal pictures, squeak toys, block toys or plastic animals can be used to teach animal sounds.

- *Water toys:* Soft, colorful plastic animals and shapes are best. Children love to pour from one container to another.
- *Dress up materials:* Provide beads or necklaces, bracelets, hats, large purses and large shoes. Locate these materials attractively near a mirror.
- *Housekeeping materials:* Provide a small sink and stove, pots and pans, cups, plates, spoons and pouring utensils. A basket full of plastic food and a small table and chairs add to the fun.
- *Drawers and chests:* Toddlers enjoy opening and closing drawers and putting objects inside.
- *Broom & mops:* Toddlers love to help you clean. Toy vacuum cleaners are enjoyed at this age.

SCENE III

PROGRAMS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Planning a program for children two years old can be a challenge. The children are active, attention spans are short and it's difficult to organize group activities. However, with careful planning and preparation, with a day that is both highly organized and that allows for individual freedom and with an environment that is specifically designed for this age group, you can create a program that is fun for the children and, at the same time, provides lots of learning opportunities.

What to Expect

Two's are a special breed. Their understanding of the world is growing by leaps and bounds. They are active, curious, exploratory and into everything. They have trouble sharing. They need opportunities to look, touch, put together and take apart, to experiment with words and to hear language. All senses should be stimulated so that the children can learn to be aware of their world, to be active learners. Although children vary in their rates of development, here are some guidelines for what you can expect most children to be doing.

Emerging Abilities

24-30 months:

- expanding language
- single words, some two or three word combinations
- gestures and actions
- climbs
- simple puzzles: nesting toys are enjoyed
- build with blocks
- starting to enjoy art activities like scribbling and finger painting
- follows simple directions
- points to pictures in books
- labels pictures in books
- talks in increasingly longer sentences
- experiments with paint, crayons, and many different art mediums
- simple imaginative play
- begins to carry out simple activities like cooking, driving to work
- matches colors and pictures and shape

30-36 months:

- listens to stories
- learns words and actions to songs
- names colors and shapes
- imaginative play episodes become longer and more complex
- learns to sort pictures into categories
- follows directions

Planning Activities

It is important to provide young children with daily exposure to the following kinds of activities: language, problem solving, imaginative play, sensory and science experiences, art and cooking experiences and movement and music experiences.

Language

The understanding of language and the ability to communicate ideas, feelings and needs is an

evolving process. During these early years children need many opportunities to hear language and to practice using language. At 18 months most children understand simple commands and can say a few words. By three they have learned to speak in sentences (maybe even paragraphs) and can understand a simple story. Language occurs, of course, not just in the language arts area but in every area of the classroom—on the playground, in the bathroom, at the lunch table. In every area there should be many opportunities for children to hear language and to practice their new skills.

Some ways we can help children of this age learn language include:

1. *Labeling and describing objects.*
2. *Using specific language*—Instead of saying, "Get that over there and bring it here," say, "Please get the red ball that's under the chair and put it on the table."
3. *Describing your actions for the children*— "I am making an omelet. First I crack an egg---."
4. *Describing for the child the activities she is doing.* "I see you've made a tower. Oh, you're putting the yellow block on the top---."
5. *Exposing the child to many rhymes, songs, and stories.*

Specific Activities to Encourage Language

Although language occurs in every area of the classroom, it is helpful to have a special area devoted to language learning. Let's look at the whys, or goals of that area, the developmental sequences you can expect, the materials and activities which will help you attain these goals and move children through the described sequences.

Whys: To increase vocabulary
To increase understanding of language
To learn classification skills

Expected Developmental Sequence

- understands simple directions or commands
- points to pictures
- labels pictures
- listens to a picture book story
- matches two objects
- matches an object to a picture
- matches like pictures
- sorts pictures into categories (by use, substance or location)
- tells a story about a picture
- puts pictures into sequence (starting with two pictures)
- enjoys increasingly more complex stories

Materials for the Language Area

- *Books:* hard cardboard pages, simple story and picture books
- *Picture cards:* DLM cards, homemade cards, matching cards can be made from catalogs, cutout pictures or stickers placed on index cards
- *Common objects:* small animals, miniature cars, trucks, trains, small dishes, dolls, etc. Make an object box and continually change the objects.
- *Puzzles with common objects*
- *Old typewriter*
- *Printing stamps:* You can get a transportation set, a food set, etc.
- *Lotto games:* Use one card at a time and you have a fairly simple matching activity.
- *Puppet theatre*
- *Wall posters with interesting pictures*
- *Sequence cards:* Start with sets that have only two in a sequence.

Base activities on the sequences presented. Give children lots of opportunities to look at books and pictures and to listen to stories. Play matching and sorting games with picture cards. Play lotto games to encourage sorting and matching skills. Let children make puppets talk and tell stories.

Problem Solving

Activities in the problem solving area are designed to help children learn thinking skills, to expand basic concepts and to develop the readiness skills that underly reading, writing and math.

Whys: To develop an understanding of color, shape, size and number
To develop matching skills
To develop sorting skills
To develop ordering skills
To improve spatial relationships
To encourage the development of fine motor skills

Expected Developmental Sequences

Ideas about color

- matches colors
- sorts by color
- labels colors

Ideas about size

- can identify big and little when given two choices
- sorts objects by size
- orders objects into a size sequence

Ideas about shape

- matches circles, squares, triangles
- can put appropriate shape into hole in shape sorter
- can do simple form board
- labels shapes
- can find shapes imbedded in pictures
- sorts by shape

Ideas about numbers

- counting by rote
- one-to-one correspondence
- putting objects in sets of two or three
- counting objects
- identifying numerals

Ideas about color and shape and size

- can work with two dimensional matrices where the attributes are color and shape
- can work with two dimensional matrices where the attributes are color and size

Ideas about patterns

- copies a simple pattern made of blocks
- makes a pattern with no logical elements
- makes a pattern with some symetry
- extends and creates a logical pattern

Materials for Learning about Color

- color lotto
- colored teddy bear counters and matching colored containers
- peg boards
- stacking squares
- color cards and matching board

For Learning about Shape

- geometric shapes
- shape sorter
- shape puzzles
- pressed board shapes
- shape stamps

For Learning about Size

- stacking squares
- table blocks
- nesting toys
- Montessori cylinders
- pink tower
- long stair
- broad stair

For Patterning

- bead stackers
- bead cubes
- pattern cards

For Learning about Sets and Numbers

- *For one-to-one correspondence activities*—card with barns. One animal is placed in each barn. Card with parking spaces. One car goes in each space, etc.
- *For learning to count*—cubes, buttons, counting beads, color and sorting box, teddy bear counters
- *For learning sets and numbers*—number cards, set cards, unifix cubes, magnetic numeral and board, number puzzles, dominoes
- *Puzzles*—one piece inset puzzles with knobs (outline puzzle pieces on board with magic numbers)

For Developing Small Motor Skills

- threading block
- sewing cards
- large wooden beads and string

Science: Sensory Activities

Sensory activities are usually among the most popular activities at this age level. They provide opportunities for children to heighten their sensory awareness, to practice many fine motor skills and to expand their language skills. Additionally, they encourage a great deal of social interaction.

Whys: To encourage children to ask questions
To help children use their senses for investigation
To provide opportunities for discoveries
To develop problem solving and fine motor skills
To develop nuturance and responsibility
To foster social interaction

Activities: Materials

- *Water play:* The ideal place for water play is in a water table. To prevent children from getting too wet, let them wear smocks. If you don't have a water table, use a large dishpan or tub.
- *Cornmeal play:* Place cornmeal in a large low basin. Give children coffee scoops, cups and sifters. To vary the activity use small cars and farm animals and make roads and mountains.
- *Rice:* Rice pouring is a favorite of children of all ages. The advantage of rice is that while it can get messy, it is very easy to vacuum. The same kinds of implements and activities suggested for cornmeal and water work well with rice.
- *Beans:* For children above the age of 2 1/2, where swallowing is no longer a problem, bean pouring and sorting is an excellent activity. Individual small trays and scoops work best. Black and white beans can be used for sorting activities.
- *Eye dropper and colored water:* Give children small bowls of colored water and let them experiment with picking up and squirting water. Once the fine motor skill is mastered color mixing activities can be introduced.
- *Smell jars:* Use film cans with holes punched in the tops. Soak cotton in extract (vanilla, peppermint, rum, almond), perfume or add spices. Seal the jars. Make two sets so you can do matching activities.
- *Material trays:* Provide trays of shells, rocks or pine cones of various shapes and sizes. Give children experience sorting and classifying, noticing likenesses and differences. Increase their interest by adding magnifying glasses.
- *Texture trays:* Offer an assortment of textures to increase the children's sensory awareness. Texture matching activities can be made easily. Another texture activity is an opposite activity. A tray of rough and a tray of smooth, something heavy and something light, thin materials and thick materials, etc.
- *Salt tray:* Children will enjoy drawing circles, lines and, eventually, letters with their fingers.
- *Nature walks:* Increase the fun by making a nature bracelet. Put a piece of tape around each child's wrist. During the walk stick pieces of grass, leaves, flowers, small rocks or bark on the tape. Collect leaves, rocks, bark, etc. in a bucket. Use the materials to sort or make collages. Paint rocks or do leaf printing.
- *Planting activities:* Plant seeds in dirt, sponges or water. Talk about how they grow. Look at roots, stems and leaves. Smell the flowers. A fun toddler activity is to give each child a paper cup. Let her punch holes in the bottom and decorate it with markers (or by tearing and pasting scraps of paper to it). Let each child put dirt in her cup and plant seeds.
- *Weighing and measuring:* A small balance scale gives children experience with different weights.
- *Animals:* Although it requires extra effort classroom animals, fish, rabbits or gerbils help children learn about animals' needs and the responsibility of caring for another living thing.
- *Magnets:* Put out magnets and a tray of metal and nonmetal objects. Let children discover what objects can be picked up.
- *Sink and float experiments:* Put out a tray of objects and a bowl of water. Let each child pick up an object, guess what will happen and try it out. Put all objects that sink on one tray and all objects that float on another.
- *Color paddles:* These paddles give children experience with mixing colors.

Tasting Activities

Everyone loves activities where taste is involved. In your activity you can concentrate on a kind of taste (sweet, salty, sour), matching tastes or textures. You can prepare a tray with three sections, sweet, sour and salty and let the children taste and compare. Another way to do this is to introduce one taste a day and let children sample several items that fall within that category.

To do a texture activity let children taste something crunchy (nuts, granola, cereal), something sticky (peanut butter), something thick and gooey (honey), something slippery (jello) and something smooth (whipped cream). This can be done all at once as a taste and compare experience or spread out across the week.

You can extend a tasting activity into a lesson about properties of objects. Show the children an orange and a grapefruit. Which is bigger? What shape are they? Are the colors the same? Is the skin smooth or bumpy? How does it look under a magnifying glass? When you cut them, are they juicy? What does the inside of the skin look like? Is it rough or smooth? Is the orange white on the inside? Does one fruit taste sweet or sour?

Imaginative Play

The imaginative play area is sometimes the most neglected of all areas of the classroom.

We feel, however, that it is an area of vital importance. The imaginative play area encouraged children to be creative, to use language and to experiment with different roles. It provides an opportunity for children to play together and learn to interact. Although children enjoy playing in this area without teacher interference, a well-trained teacher's suggestion, or a new prop, can help the children to expand their play and to add new dimensions.

Whys: To help children consolidate experience
To help children express good and bad feelings
To help children develop communication skills
To practice playing with others

Pretend Scenarios You Can Create

(Vary the scenario with the curriculum and with the children's interests.)

- *Doll play:* Dolls, high chair, cradle, bottles, spoons, baby feeding dish, baby carriage, empty powder and lotion containers, changing table, diapers, baby toys and books.
- *Cooking:* Childsize stove, sink, table and chairs, tea set, pots and pans, cooking utensils, tablecloth, napkins, plastic foods, serving trays.
- *Dress-up:* Vanity, mirror, hooks to hang clothes, dress-up clothes, hats, shoes, purses, beads, bracelets, nonbreakable glasses.
- *Store:* Cash register, counter, play money, play food and real empty boxes and cans, shopping cart.
- *Pretending with miniature environments:* Small cars and trucks, building blocks, ramps, road signs, small people, boats, trains, small houses, animals.
- *Pretending with puppets:* Puppets encourage children to use language and to play different roles. Set up a puppet stage and give the children many different puppets to play with.

Arts and Crafts

Art for young people is a process. It's an opportunity to explore, to create and to enjoy. The final product is not the major concern. It's far better for children to do something that exemplifies their own talents than to concentrate on doing elaborate crafts that are essentially teacher-made.

Whys: To encourage children to explore different materials
To develop artistic use of materials
To develop a sense of personal accomplishment

Types of Art Projects

- *Painting:* Painting is a joyful experience for most young children. Even the 18 month old will be able to use a brush to paint. Some small children dislike getting their hands dirty and will brush paint before they will finger paint.

  Types of paint: Water colors, non-toxic tempera paints, finger paints.

  Surfaces for painting: Young children enjoy variety. Try painting on an easel, painting on individual paper and painting on a mural (either taped to the table or on the wall). Mural painting allows children to create something of their own which will decorate the room (see theme projects for specific ideas).

  Finger painting can be done on a messy play tray (Childcraft), the table or individual floor tiles. When the children create something they want to save, make a print on newsprint. It is also fun to paint objects. Let the children collect and paint rocks, shells, pine cones, sticks or scrap pieces of wood.

  Paint media: Children of this age can paint with brushes, fingers, sponges, Q-tips, cotton balls,

eye droppers and string. They also enjoy stamp painting. Potatoes cut in half with designs etched into the top work especially well. Even the 18 month old child can make a pumpkin picture for Halloween using this method. Cookie cutters (as long as the tab knobs are large enough) allow children to make holiday designs. Vegetable printing is also fun. Try carrots, string beans, cauliflower and broccoli.

Other Kinds of Painting:

- *Shaving cream finger painting* – Use non-menthol shaving cream and a smooth surface. Add food coloring to make it even more interesting.
- *Ivory snowflake finger painting* – Add a little water to ivory snowflakes and beat with egg beater. This makes thick suds that can be used like finger paint. Food coloring can also be added.
- *Pudding paint* – For an extra special treat try using chocolate pudding.

- *Pasting:* Once a child has learned to paste, all kinds of craft projects can be carried out. For little ones large tongue depressers and individual portions of paste placed in baby jar lids work well. Another method of pasting involves watering down Elmer's Glue and painting it on with a brush. Children can paste paper. They can create collages by pasting materials and they can sprinkle salt, colored sand, rice or glitter on paper to create interesting effects. (For specific projects see theme ideas.)
- *Playdoh:* Kneading playdoh aids in developing small motor skills and it's a favorite among the younger children. You can make your own playdoh with the following recipe:

Playdoh

1c. flour	2 tsp. oil
½c. salt	1c. water

Cook and stir over medium heat until playdoh thickens. Color with food coloring (make it very bright). Vary the

Finger Paint Recipes

Cooked

#1 Mix 1c. laundry starch (inc. instant)
1c. cold water
Add 4c. boiling water and cook until clear, stirring constantly. (The mixture will not be as thick as the finished product.)
Add 1c. soap flakes and beat with egg beater until smooth
Store in plastic container in refrigerator.

#2 Gradually add 2 qts. water to 1c. corn starch. Cook until clear. Add ½c. soap flakes.
A few drops of glycerin or oil of wintergreen may be added.

#3 Mix 1c. flour
1c. cold water
Add 3c. boiling water and bring to boil, stirring constantly. Add 1 tbsp. coloring.

Non-cooked

#4 Mix 1c. dry starch
½c. water (in container that can take boiling water)
Add 1½c. boiling water and stir rapidly
Add ¾c. powdered detergent and stir again until smooth

#5 Place liquid Vano starch on work area. Add powdered tempera paint
(Add non-detergent liquid soap to liquid starch to facilitate clean-up)

#6 Mix 1c. laundry starch
1c. cold water
3c. soap flakes

#7 Mix in blender:
1 1-lb can powdered starch
¼c. liquid starch
⅓ to ½c. water
1 tbsp. soap powder

#8 Mix 1¼c. wheat paste
4c. water
½c. soap flakes

Implements presented with the playdoh. Try rolling pins, tongue depressers, small cookie cutters, plastic knives, and scissors.

Cooking

Cooking for children means creating something to eat. It can involve baking, but there are many projects that can be carried out with no cooking.

Whys: To provide opportunities to use all senses
To learn about food and nutrition
To develop small muscle coordination
To stimulate language and concept development
To help children follow directions

Activities

•*Spreading Activities:* This is an excellent fine motor task and an important self-help skill. Give children plastic knives that are not sharp. Some spreads that can be used are cream cheese (mix in a little milk to make it spread easier), peanut butter, apple butter, butter and jelly. Spread on bread, crackers, slices of fruit or celery. For a special party make cupcakes and allow each child to ice and decorate her own.

•*Cutting Activities:* Use plastic knives and foods that can be easily cut. Have the children make fruit salad by slicing bananas, adding raisins, coconut, etc. Children can practice cutting on soft bread. The bread can then be used for baking bread pudding or for food for the birds.

•*No Bake Cooking*

Peanut Butter Playdoh
one of the most favorite activities
(This should not be sticky. It should feel just like playdoh.)

1 16 oz. jar peanut butter 1 envelope of powdered milk
½c. honey

Mix well. Use as playdoh or roll into balls. Roll in crushed nuts or graham cracker crumbs. Decorate creations with raisins.

Apple juice smoothies: Have each child bring in a piece of fruit (frozen or fresh), berries, bananas, pears, apples, peaches. Put in a blender with apple juice.

Kabobs: Give children cubes of cheese, ham, pineapple. Let the children spear with toothpicks.

Fruit salad: Wash and cut fruit. Practice slicing. Add shredded coconut, raisins, honey.

Cornmeal muffins: Use a store-bought mix or make your own from scratch.

Cookies: Children love to bake all kinds of cookies. You can buy cookie mixes or start from scratch. Try peanut butter, chocolate chip or applesauce.

Vegetable soup: Ask each child to bring in one vegetable. Allow children to taste vegetables raw as well as cooked. Give each child a turn to wash a vegetable, cut it up and add to the soup.

Apple juice and apple butter: Try making homemade apple juice in an electric juicer. Give each child an apple to wash and cut up. Let the children put their apples in the juicer individually so they can see how much juice is made. Serve apple juice with apple butter.

English muffin pizza: Toast English muffins, spread with spaghetti sauce and top with grated cheese, Place muffins in oven or under broiler until cheese melts.

Movement and Music Activities

Movement and music activities help children to become more aware of their bodies, to develop their ability to take the initiative and to learn specific concepts. Songs and finger play give children the opportunity to hear the structure and rhythm of language and to have fun with words.

Whys: To develop an appreciation of music
To develop listening skills
To improve coordination and rhythm
To provide for self-expression

Movement Activities

•*Simon Says:* Play Simon Says without the competitive component. Use this to teach body parts or to do exercise, reach up and touch the ceiling, way down and touch the floor.

•*Trees are gently swaying:* Give each child a leaf cut from construction paper or cardboard. Have them sway with the leaf in their hands.

"The trees are gently swaying, swaying, swaying
The trees are gently swaying, swaying in the breeze."

•*Square dancing*—Join hands in a circle.

"Round and around and around we go,
round and around and around we go
round and around and around we go
around and around we go."

Other verses:
"Up and up and up, we go
Down and down and down we go
In and in and in we go
Out and out and out we go
Side to side to side we go
Kick and kick and kick we go.

•*Airplane song:* (teaches the concept of up and down)

Make each child her own airplane by stapling a colored strip of construction paper to a straw.

"Hold your airplane up up up up up
Wave it all around, wave it all around
Bring your airplane down, down, down, down, down, down,
Down, down, to the ground.

•*Marching song:*

Marching, marching, we are marching
Marching, marching down the street
Marching, marching, we are marching
Hear the sound of trampling feet.

•*Rhythm band:*

Give each child an instrument and have them shake it to the music. Combine rhythm band and marching and have a parade.

•*Stickband:*

Give each child a pair of sticks. Practice following the leader. (hit on the floor, over head, in front, to the side) Teach children to follow rhythm and sequences.

•*Favorite Records for Two's*

"Music for One's and Two's," Tom Glazer
"And One and Two," Ella Jenkins
"Ann Murray Sings for the Sesame Street Generation"
"Singable Songs for the Very Young," Sung by Rolffi
"Homemade Band," Hap Palmer
"Playtime Parachute Fund for Early Childhood"
"Getting to Know Myself," Hap Palmer
"Early, Early Childhood Songs," Ella Jenkins

Songs and Finger Plays for Two Year Olds
(See Infant & Toddler Chapter for additional songs)

Honey Bunny
(to the tune of Frere Jacques)

Honey Bunny, Honey Bunny *(stroke arm)*
Nice and soft, nice and soft
We love to feed you carrots *(pretend to feed carrots)*
We love to feed you carrots
Hop away. Hop away. *(put up two fingers & have them hop)*

Tree Swaying
(Give each child a large leaf to hold & have them sway back and forth)

Trees are gently swaying, swaying, swaying.
Trees are gently swaying, swaying in the breeze.

Raindrop Song

Raindrops fall with a pitter, patter, pat, pitter, patter pat, pitter, patter, pat. *(make finger go up & down)*
Raindrops fall with a pitter, patter, pat—making all things grow. *(raise cupped hands)*

Who Has a Nose?
(tune of Frere Jacques)

Who has a nose, I have a nose.
Who has toes, I have toes.
Who has lots of fingers, I have lots of fingers
Now we know, now we know.

Who can wiggle their nose? I can wiggle my nose.
Who can wiggle their toes? I can wiggle my toes.
Who can shake their fingers? I can shake my fingers.
Now we know, now we know.

(repeat with mouth, ears, open mouth, wiggle ears, poke belly button. Make up many more verses.)

Sweeping Song

I like to sweep with my little broom, to help my mommy clean the room.
Sometimes my broom is a pony strong, and through the house we gallop along.
Getty-up pony, getty-up pony, whoa, whoa, whoa

The Noble Duke of York
The noble Duke of York he had 10,000 men. *(hold hands in a circle)*
He marched them up to the top of the hill and marched them down again. *(march & then squat)*
And when they were up, they were up *(stand up)*
And when they were down, they were down *(squat down)*
And when they were only half way up *(stop half way up)*
They were neither up nor down.

You Take Your Little Head
(tune of Wheels on the Bus)

You take your little head and go nod, nod, nod, nod, nod, nod, nod, nod, nod.
You take your little head and go nod, nod, nod, nod, nod, nod your head.
(clap your hands, tap your knees, wiggle your nose, bump your elbow, etc.)

This Is the Way
(to tune of Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)

This is the way we wash our clothes,
Wash our clothes, wash our clothes.
This is the way we wash our clothes, so early in the morning.
(repeat with brush our teeth, sew our clothes, wash our hands, etc.)

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes *(touch each part mentioned)*
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.

Old MacDonald
Old MacDonald had a farm, ee, ii, ee, ii, o.
And on his farm he had a pig, ee, ii, ee, ii, o.
With an oink, oink here, and an oink, oink there.
Here an oink, there an oink, everywhere an oink, oink.
Old MacDonald had a farm, ee, ii, ee, ii, o.

Six Little Ducks
Six little ducks that I once knew *(hold up 6 fingers)*
Fat ones, skinny ones, big ones, too *(use 2 hands to show size)*
But the one little duck with the feather on his back *(put one hand on back)*
He ruled the others with a quack, quack, quack. *(flap arms like wings)*
Quack, quack, quack.

Down to the river they would go *(point over shoulder)*
Waddling, waddling, to and fro *(put hands together and move them back & forth)*
But the one little duck with the feather on his back,
He ruled the others with a quack, quack, quack,
Quack, quack, quack.

I Have a Pretty Valentine
(tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb)

I have a pretty valentine, valentine, valentine
I have a pretty valentine
My valentine is red.

Rainbow Song
(tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Red and orange, green and blue
Shining yellow, purple too
All the colors that we know
Live up in the rainbow.

Marching Song

Marching, marching, we are marching.
Marching, marching down the street.
Marching, marching, we are marching
Hear the sound of tramping feet.

Twinkle, Twinkle Traffic Light
(tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

Twinkle, twinkle traffic light
On the corner shining bright.
Red means go very slow.
(repeat)

Love Makes the World Go Round
(give each child a heart to wave or sway with)

Love makes the world go round
Love makes the world go round
La la la la la la la
Love makes the world go round.

The More We Get Together
(sway in unison)

The more we get together, together, together,
The more we get together, the happier we will be.

Variations on Traditional Songs

Song: The Wheels on the Bus Go 'Round and 'Round
Variations:
After going through the routine things—put a cat on the bus that goes meow, a ghost on the bus that goes boo. Let the children come up with new ideas.

Variations on Traditional Songs

Song: *The Wheels on the Bus Go 'Round and 'Round*
Variations:
After going through the routine things—put a cat on the bus that goes meow, a ghost on the bus that goes boo. Let the children come up with new ideas.

Song: *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*

Variations:
Add variations like:

An alarm clock that goes dong
A saw that goes buzz
A fly that goes bzzz
Corn that goes "pop"

Song: *When You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands*

Variations:
When you're angry and you know it, stamp your feet.
When you're sleepy and you know it, start to snore.
When you're silly and you know it, laugh hee-hee.

Song: *She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain When She Comes*

Variations:
She'll be slicing up red onions when she comes.
She'll be riding on a horse fly when she comes.

Song: *This Is the Way We Wash Our Clothes*

Variations:
This is the way we wiggle our ears.
This is the way we tickle our tummy.

Song: *This Old Man*

This old man, This old man,
He played nick-nack on his thumb

Variations:
He played nick-nack on his monkey.
He played nick-nack on his alligator.

Song: *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*

Variations:
Pump, pump, pump your bike, gently down the hill
Merrily, merrily, merrily, do not have a spill.

Drive, drive, drive your car, gently down the street
Merrily, merrily, merrily, pump with your feet.

Finger Plays & Poems

Open Them/Shut Them

Open them/shut them, give a little clap *(Open and shut hands)*
Open them/shut them, lay them on your lap *(put hands on lap)*
Creep them, creep them, right up to your chin *(Creep fingers)*
Open wide your little mouth but do not let them... *(shake head)* *(Open mouth)*

Where Is Thumbkin?

Where is thumbkin? Where is thumbkin? *(Hands behind back)*
Here I am, here I am. *(Hold up one thumb and then the other)*
How are you today, sir? Very well, I thank-you. *(Have thumbs "talk" to each other.)*
Run away, run away. *(Hide the other hand behind back)*
(continue with pointer, tallman, ringman, and pinky)

Teddy Bear Poem
(Act out motions)

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your prayers.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn off the light,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good-night.

Beehive

Here is a beehive *(make a fist)*
Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Soon they come creeping out of the hive,
1-2-3-4-5 *(Unfold fingers one by one)*

Traffic Light Poem

Red light, red light, you are too slow,
Turn to green so we can go.

How Many Valentines?

Valentines, valentines;
How many do you see?
Valentines, valentines,
Count them with me.

One for father *(Hold up thumb)*
One for mother *(Hold up pointer finger)*
One for grandma, too. *(Hold up middle finger)*
One for sister *(Hold up ring finger)*
One for brother *(Hold up little finger)*
And here is one for YOU *(Make heart shape with thumbs and pointer fingers)*

My Little Sports Car

My little sports car needs some gas.
How many gallons shall I ask? *(Hold out hands)*
1, 2, 3, that's enough for me. *(Hold up fingers)*
Wipe the windshield *(Make a mopping motion)*
Change the oil *(Roll hands)*
I'll be back in a little while,
Just like that. *(Snap fingers)*

Apple Tree

Way up in the apple tree *(Point upward)*
Two red apples smiled at me. *(Hold up two fingers)*
I shook that tree as hard as I could *(Pretend to shake the trunk)*
Mmmm those apples sure were good. *(Rub stomach)*

Turtle

I know a little turtle who lives in a box *(Make a box outline with fingers)*
He swam in the water *(Makes waves with hand)*
and climbed upon the rocks *(Make hands climb)*
He snapped at a mosquito *(Snap fingers)*
He snapped at a flea, he snapped at a minnow and he snapped at me *(Point to self)*
He caught that mosquito *(Clap)* he caught that flea *(Clap)* he caught that minnow
But he didn't catch me *(Shake head)*

Five Little Monkeys

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed *(Hold up five fingers and make them jump)*
One fell down and bumped his head *(Bump head on hand)*
Mommy called the doctor *(Pretend to dial a phone with one hand and hold the other to your ear)*
And the doctor said,
That's what you get for jumping on the bed *(Shake fingers)*

Auto, Auto

Auto, auto may I have a ride? *(Make fist with thumb up and wiggle thumb)*
Yes, sir, yes, sir, step right inside. *(Have thumbs talk to each other)*
Pour in the water *(Make pouring motion)*
Turn on the gas *(Turn key)*
V-room, V-room, V-room *(Pretend to steer)*
But not too fast *(Wiggle finger)*

Five Little Pumpkins

Five little pumpkins sitting on the gate,
The first one said oh my it's getting late.
The second one said there's witches in the air.
The third one said but we don't care.
The fourth one said come on let's have some fun.
The fifth one said let's run, run, and run.

OOH, went the wind,
And out went the lights.
And five little pumpkins rolled out of sight.

Squirrel

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel
Swish your fluffy tail.
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel,
Swish your fluffy tail.
Wrinkle up your little nose,
Put a nut between your toes,
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel,
Swish your fluffy tail.

The Turkey Is a Funny Bird

The turkey is a funny bird.
His head goes wobble, wobble, wobble.
But all he knows is just one word—
Gobble, gobble, gobble.

Grandma's Glasses

Here's Grandmas's glasses,
Here is Grandma's hat.
This is the way she folds her hands,
And lays them in her lap.

SCENE IV

THE TWO YEAR OLD CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Curriculum is a word that is used to describe a set of planned experiences in a school setting. When we think of curriculum, we usually think about the subjects that are being taught. The curriculum in this context includes all of the planned experiences that lead to the mastery of the skills and concepts within each of the subjects. Curriculum in a child care setting has a different emphasis. Our major concern is not so much with the mastery of a subject area, but with the developmental needs and characteristics of the learner.

Planning

In order to plan a curriculum that is organized, that has a purpose and specific goals many caregivers choose to use the theme approach. A theme can go for a week, two weeks or a month. Many of the classroom activities can be centered on the theme.

Theme Suggestions for Two Year Olds

All about me
My family
Colors:
- Red Week
- Yellow Week
- Blue Week
- Green Week

Holidays:
- Halloween
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas
- Hanakah
- Easter
- Fourth of July

Community Helpers
- Firemen
- Policemen
- Garbagemen

Animals:
- The Farm
- The Zoo
- Pets

The Beach

The Seasons
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

Transportation

Sample Theme Ideas

Rainbow Month

•*Objectives:* To help children become more aware of colors, to learn to match and label colors. Work each week on a different color. Call it the "Color of the Week." Set aside a special day where you send notes home to the parents and all the children wear something which is the color of the week.

•*Problem-Solving and Language Activities*

Color match games: Use a variety of different objects to make it interesting (pegs, blocks, color squares, etc.).

Color sort games: A variety of objects works well. A fun game is to use teddy bears and match each one to its house, or to park cars in the appropriately colored parking places.

Color guessing games: Put out a red block and a blue block. Cover one and see if the children can guess what color is hiding.

Color lotto games: These can be easily made out of tag board. Start simply with only a few colors on each card.

•*Art Activities*

Paint a rainbow: Each week have the children paint a large piece of paper a specific color. Save the murals, cut them into long strips and put them together to make a rainbow for the room.

Water play: Color the water the color of the week.

Playdoh: Make playdoh in the color of the week.

Paste a rainbow: Cut rainbow strips and let children paste them to newsprint.

Finger paint: Paint with only one color, the color of the week.

•*Music and Movement Activities*

Rainbow song: (Tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star")

Make one large rainbow and individual color cards. Each child holds up her card when her color is named.

"Red and orange, green and blue
Shining yellow, purple, too.
All the colors that we know
Live up in the rainbow."

Airplane song: Make colored airplanes for the children. Have each child stand when her color is called.

"Hold the red plane up, up, up, up, up, up.
Wave it all around, wave it all around.
Bring the red plane down, down, down, down, down, down.
Down to the ground."

All About Me

•*Objectives:* To help children increase their awareness of themselves, their bodies and their capacities. All About Me can be divided into units. Suggested units may be: Me and My Body, How Big Am I? What Do I Look Like? I Have Feelings, I Can Take Care of Myself.

Letter to Parents Describing Curriculum

Dear Parents,

The theme for this month is ALL ABOUT ME. The purpose of this theme is to increase each child's self awareness. Every week has a different topic, I have a body, What do I look like? How big am I? I have feelings, I can take care of myself. Each theme is important! The classroom activities are only the tip of the iceberg. There are many things you can do at home to help expand these ideas. Lots of things may be incorporated into every day activities, talking about body parts, singing body part songs at bath time, listening to your heart beat, talking about how the right foods help you grow at mealtime. While brushing your child's hair have him/her look in the mirror and describe for him/her how he or she looks, or compare your looks to your child's. Look at baby pictures and talk about how much your child has grown. Show them your baby pictures. Outside make footprints in the sand, or talk about your shadows. Putting words together with your child's emotions will help him cope. "Oh, I see you're sad." "You're mad because." "Are you jealous because of the baby?" Help your child "practice" his/her emotions in

the mirror. Encourage your child to make choices and do as many things for herself as possible. "Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt, to go out the front door or the back? to eat on the Winnie the Pooh plate or the one with the picture of animals?" Let your child help with chores. You'll both be happier. Simple things a child can help with include washing the car, sorting the laundry, putting away clothes, setting the table, putting away toys, Making the bed, dusting, cooking—including stirring, pouring, tearing up the lettuce for salad. Encourage your child to be as independent as possible, to clean up his dinner place, wash his own hands and face, and dress himself as far as possible (even if it means extra time). In the long run the extra waiting and patience pays off.

•*Language and Problem Solving Activities*

Boy/girl sort: Get several pictures of boys and girls. Laminate them or back them with cardboard. Have children take turns choosing a picture and putting it in the boy pile or the girl pile.

Describing the feeling: Hold up cards depicting children with different emotions. Is the boy happy or sad? Is he crying? Do you think he hurt himself?

Put out puzzles that are faces or people: You can make your own puzzles by backing a picture with cardboard and cutting it into pieces.

Mirror game: Look in the mirror and describe for the child what he sees. "Oh I see two eyes. I think they are blue. What is this? Yes, it's a nose" —Etc.

•*Music and Movement Activities*

"Who has a nose?" *(infant chapter)*
"You take your little hands" (p. 47)
"When you're happy and you know it" (p. 57)
"Head and shoulders, knees and toes" (p. 56)
"Open them, shut them" (p. 58)
"Ten fingers"
"Where is thumbkin?" (p. 58)

•*Imaginative Play Activities*

Encourage dress-up: This is a good opportunity to work on self-help skills.

•*Self-Help Activities:* Work with children on hand washing, toothbrushing. Let them help with clean up tasks like picking up toys and table washing.

•*Arts and Crafts Activities*

Weighing and measuring cards: Weigh and measure children. Make a card with the information on it and have the children decorate or paint it.

Paper plate faces: Children can choose eyes, nose, mouth, etc. that match their own and paste them on their plate. Use macaroni for hair, curly noodle or straight spaghetti, and have children select their own hair type.

Body tracing: Lay children on the floor and trace their bodies. Talk about body parts as you do this. Let children paint their silhouette.

Hand and foot prints: This can be done as a tracing activity or with paint. This is a good opportunity to discuss size. Is the teacher's hand bigger or smaller?

Finger prints: Purple polka dots. Use thick paint. Have children march their fingers across the paper. This is a fun activity to do to music.

Cars, Trucks, Boats and Things That Go

Whys: To increase the children's awareness of the world around them
To foster language development
To stimulate imaginative play

Parent Letter Describing the Curriculum

Dear Parents,

This month we are concentrating on learning about different kinds of vehicles. Vehicles are usually of major interest to young children and so we will use this topic to increase the children's awareness of the world around them, to foster language development and to stimulate imaginative play. We will also continue to emphasize sensory experiences, basic concepts of color, shape and size, matching and sorting and creative expression.

Try this month to point out all kinds of vehicles to your child. Talk about the colors, the sizes, what they do, who drives them and where they are going. Try stopping at a construction site and watching a crane or a dump truck dump sand. Look for milk

trucks, gasoline trucks, campers, etc. Stop at the airport (there's an empty lot across the street) and watch the planes take off. See how many features of the vehicles you can point out. At home encourage imaginative play with small cars, trucks, boats, etc. Use them in different mediums, water, sand, grass, paved surfaces, rice, cornmeal. Add different props, for example, use blocks or a shoebox to make a garage, strips of materials to cardboard for roads, make ramps for the cars, an airport for the planes, etc. You may also pack a suitcase and go on a pretend trip or use the pillow off the couch to make a boat and go fishing.

•*Language Activities*

Language enrichment: Show transportation pictures and talk with the children about them. What is this? Does it go in the water? What color is it? Who drives it? What kind of noise does it make? Where do you think it's going?

Matching activities: Give children two sets of identical DLM cards (start with only two) and have them match identical pictures.

Sorting activities: Sort DLM cards or make your own into categories, cars, trucks, boats (start with 6 pictures, 3 cars and 3 trucks). Lay out one car and one truck on the table. As you do it say, "I'm putting my car here and my truck wants to go here." Take the next card and say, "Here's another car. I think it should go here in the car pile." Give the child the next card and ask, "Where do you think this truck should go?"

•*Problem-Solving*

To develop one-to-one correspondence: Make parking lot with six spaces. Park one small car in each space.

To develop color matching: Make a parking lot with squares of different colors. Each car needs to be parked in the appropriate space.

To develop memory: Set out three objects, one car, one truck and one boat. Have the child close his eyes while you place a box over one of the objects. Ask him what is hiding? A variation is to use one object and three boxes. Hide the object under a box while the child is watching. Screen the boxes for 30 seconds and then ask the child to tell you which box the object is under.

•*Music and Movement Activities*

"Row, Row, Row Your Boat" *(Children join hands with a partner and go up and down.)*
"Wheels on the Bus"
"Airplane Song"
"Auto Auto"
"My Little Sports Car"
Rowing *(Put on a record and have children row to the music.)*
Flying like a plane *(Have children pretend to be airplanes to the tune of "Skip to My Lou")*
Fly, fly, fly, fly to my lou
Fly, fly, fly, fly to my lou
Fly, fly, fly, fly to my lou
Fly to my lou my darling.

•*Art and Sensory Activities*

Make small boats of egg cartons: Add a sail by sticking a straw in the bottom with clay and staple a sail on.

Sail boats in the water table.

Make a big yellow school bus for the room: Outline a bus in black on a brown craft paper. Let children paint it yellow, make windows on the bus and paste pictures of the children in each window.

Make a transportation collage: Have children bring in pictures of things that move. Paste the boats in the water, the cars in the street and the airplanes in the sky.

Special treat: Have a parade day where the children bring their favorite riding toy. Decorate them with balloons and make hats with the children.

•*Imaginative Play Activities*

Set up a small cars and trucks area: Add blocks and road signs. Make ramps with wood. Put small cars in a tray of cornmeal and have races.

Taking a Trip: Props to bring include clothes, suitcases, cars to drive, chairs to convert into a train, purses, tickets, play money.

Planning Sheets

Plan your curriculum in an organized fashion so that all caregivers can determine easily the day's activities.

Dates: _____ **Objectives:** _____

Theme: _____ _____

		Mon	Tues	Wed	Th	Fri
WEEK 1	Circle time Language activities Problem solving Snack time activity or finger plays Discovery activities* Music/movement					
WEEK 2	Circle time Language activities Problem solving Snack time activity or finger plays Discovery activities* Music/movement					
WEEK 3	Circle time Language activities Problem solving Snack time activity or finger plays Discovery activities* Music/movement					
WEEK 4	Circle time Language activities Snack time activity or finger plays Problem solving Discovery activities* Music/movement					
	*The discovery activity may be art, cooking, a sensory activity, or a science project.					

Preparation Sheets

Theme: _____

Materials Needed for the Unit

To be brought from home	Date Needed

Materials to be purchased

Material	Price	Date Needed

Scheduling Activities

Some Alternatives

Two's and three's need a great deal of routine and structure within a flexible program. The same schedule should be basically adhered to each day. Transition activities should be developed and should remain consistent. Opening and closing circle times are important. There should be a special hello and a special goodbye song that are used each day and there should be repetition of favorite activities. At the same time, young children can't be forced to participate when they choose not to and they can't be expected to sit still for any great length of time. Balance active and quiet times, group and individual activities, indoor and outdoor play. Some suggested schedules.

For an All Day Program

8:00- 8:30	Greetings and free play
8:30- 8:45	Good Morning Circle
8:45- 9:45	Language and problem solving activities
9:45-10:15	Arts and crafts or cooking
10:15-10:30	Snack
10:30-11:15	Outdoor play
11:15-11:45	Imaginative play
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15- 2:00	Quiet time
2:00- 2:30	Music and movement
2:30- 3:30	Outdoor play
3:30- 4:00	Sensory experience
4:00- 4:15	Goodbye Circle

For a Morning Program

8:00- 8:15	Greetings and free play (Special sensory activities can be done at this time)
8:15- 8:30	Good Morning Circle
8:30- 9:30	Language and problem solving: science activities
9:30-10:00	Arts and crafts
10:00-10:30	Playground
10:30-11:00	Snack (fingerplay)
11:00-11:30	Music and movement
11:30-11:35	Goodbye Circle
11:35-11:45	Free play - dismissal

We suggest you set up your classroom in areas. Children can be given free access to all areas, some areas or they can go to areas in small groups. Your choice will be dependent on the physical layout of your classroom, number of children and staffing patterns.

I'M

ACT IV

SECOND PERFORMANCES

SCENE I

PROGRAMS FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

A Short Story

Mr. Briggs and Miss Carpenter were team teaching a kindergarten class. It was obvious from the beginning that they would not get along with each other. When the principal came into the room they were having one of their usual spats.

Mr. Briggs:
Now, Miss Carpenter, you know perfectly well when you teach children the alphabet you stay in order. The alphabet starts with A, and that's where we have to begin.

Miss Carpenter:
I see no earthly reason for beginning with an A. If you insist on my teaching the alphabet, I want to make it fun. I could let each child bake a letter cookie with his or her initial on it. A letter would be more meaningful to a child if it stood for something important.

Mr. Briggs:
Can't you ever by systematic about anything? We'd be in a fine mess if we did it your way. Every child would learn a different letter and no one would learn the alphabet.

After listening to this conversation, the principal decided that Mr. Briggs and Miss Carpenter should not be team teaching. Their ideas about how children learn were just too different. Mr. Briggs felt that children learn because they are taught. The task of the teacher is to prepare systematic lessons that cover the subject matter in a logical way. If you are going to teach the alphabet you begin with the letter A. You praise the children as they write it or say its sound and then do the same thing the next day with the letter B. As long as you break lessons down into small enough tasks and reward children for getting things right, you can teach them just about anything.

Miss Carpenter, who was a great believer in Piaget, the Swiss psychologist, had a totally different idea about how children learn. Miss Carpenter was sure that children play an active part in the learning process. They don't just store up the information they are given by the teacher, like a sponge soaking up water. The child actively examines new information and tries to link it up in some way to the information she already has. When children are introduced to something completely new, like a letter, they have to attach it to something they already know, like their name. Miss Carpenter felt that learning is fun for children as long as it is meaningful. It is not only unnecessary, but even unwise, to bribe or reward children for learning something new.

Neither Mr. Briggs nor Miss Carpenter can be considered right or wrong. Each represents a point of view that has become the basis of accepted practice. Mr. Briggs is a behaviorist or learning theorist and the methods he believes in work well in practice, especially with children who are developmentally delayed or who need remediation. Miss Carpenter is a cognitive developmentalist. The methods she believes in encourage exploration, problem solving and creative thinking.

In Act IV we will be looking at some curriculum ideas for three, four and five year old children. In the first chapter, "A Child Care Revue," we described some of the changes that have taken place in child care in the last hundred years. We talked about differences in theory and philosophy and their impact on early childhood practices. Now let us take a closer look at four preschool models that reflect different points of view about how children learn.

The Informal Preschool

The Informal Preschool traces its origins, in part, to the ideas of Froebel and Gesell. In an Informal Preschool, the child is given the opportunity to grow and learn at his own rate and in his own way. The value of play is recognized and children are encouraged to pursue their own play ideas at their own pace and with their selected playmates. The child is encouraged to try out new ideas with the emphasis on process rather than product. A great deal of attention is paid to classroom climate. The child is made to feel happy, relaxed, worthy and trustful. Feeling good about oneself and other people is the most important outcome of an early childhood experience.

The Academic Preschool

The Academic Preschool is a marked contrast to the Informal Preschool. The Academic Preschool is structured, organized and goal oriented. Objectives are stated in behavioral terms, lessons are planned to teach the objectives and reinforcement techniques are used to help children learn and retain the lessons. Academic subjects are introduced at an early age and taught in a systematic way. For the most part academic skills are taught in small groups rather than individually, although some academically oriented schools are concerned with individual prescriptions.

Based on the teaching of the learning theorists (Skinner, Watson, Thorndike, Bandura), the academic preschool endorses the following principles:

•Learning is an observable and measurable change in behavior, brought about by a process called conditioning.

•There are two kinds of conditioning: classical conditioning, when an association is made between a stimulus and a response, and operant conditioning, also called behavior modication, when a response to a stimulus is strengthened through reinforcement.

•Positive reinforcement is any action which increases the probability of a particular behavior reoccurring. In a preschool, praise from the teacher, special privileges or concrete rewards can reinforce behavior.

•Children can learn new behaviors by imitation or modeling.

•Learning is strengthened by repetition.

The role of the educator is to establish a set of terminal learning objectives within a content area, determine what the children already know, plan a sequence of lessons that lead to the terminal objective and develop a reinforcement schedule that motivates children to learn.

The best known preschool model based on the learning theorists is the Bereiter-Englemann model. In a Bereiter-Englemann school, the teacher plays an active role. Children are scheduled for short but fast-paced and highly structured learning experiences throughout the course of the day. If, for instance, the behavioral objective for the day is, "Shown a triangular shape the child will say the word 'triangle' ", children are seated in a semicircle around the teacher and the lesson proceeds in accordance with a pre-planned progression.

Teacher: *(taking a plastic trianglar shape out of a bag)* Look what I have in my bag. It is called a triangle. See it—feel it—examine it. It has three corners. Jimmy, reach in my bag—what do you have?

Jimmy: A trian---

Teacher: A triangle.

Jimmy: A triangle

Teacher: Very good, Jimmy. Now everyone say it—Triangle. Good. Mary, reach into my bag—what do you have?

The lesson proceeds until all the children have had a turn pulling the triangle out of the bag, and saying the word, "triangle."

Cognitively Oriented Preschool

The Cognitively Oriented Preschool is based on the teaching of Piaget. From a philosophic point of view, it adheres to the following concepts:

1. All children, beginning from infancy, pass through an orderly succession of developmental stages and substages. Their stage of development

determines the way they organize experience, structure problems and seek out solutions.

2. The preschool child is in the pre-operational stage of development. In contrast to the infant in the sensori-motor stage, the preschool child recognizes that objects exist even when she does not touch them. She has developed her own system of symbols (images, props, and words) to represent objects in the real world.

3. The pre-operational child is not able to manipulate ideas, or perform operations in her head. She does not recognize that if two apples and two apples make four apples, then taking two apples away leaves two. She does not realize that changing the shape or position of an object does not affect its size or weight. She is egocentric in the sense that she doesn't see things from the perspective of other people and makes the assumption that everyone sees the world from her point of view.

4. Learning takes place by the process of assimilation and accommodation. When the child is introduced to a new phenomenon she tried to understand it by associating it with things that she already knows. As she gains experience with the new phenomenon her way of thinking changes to take into account the characteristics of the new phenomenon. This implies that children should be introduced to new experiences that are related but not identical with experiences they have already had. It is called "finding the appropriate match."

5. The child is innately curious and motivated to learn and does not require external rewards.

Based on this system of beliefs the Cognitively Oriented preschool carries out the following practices:

1. The teacher is seen as a facilitator. She arranges the environment and prepares lessons and experiences appropriate to the developmental level of the children in the class.

2. Recognizing that the child learns by actively organizing and constructing the environment, the teacher provides concrete materials for the child to sort, order and arrange.

3. Concrete experiences are introduced before abstract concepts. Before the child is expected to learn the meaning of the word "cow" she is shown a real cow, some toy cows and some pictures of a cow.

4. Imaginative play is encouraged. Pretending is viewed as a way of developing a system of symbols to stand for real events and as a way of learning to take a different point of view.

5. The child is given many opportunities to experiment with different media—water, sand, paint, clay and dough. Through manipulation the child will make her own discoveries about the nature of reality.

6. No external rewards are offered for the accomplishment of a task and children are permitted to make choices about what they are going to do. Repetition of a task is encouraged if this is what the child wants.

The Montessori School

The Montessori preschool is a carefully designed early learning experience that uses the teaching techniques and the materials developed by Maria Montessori. Like the behaviorist model, a Montessori school has a carefully planned and structured day. Children are given opportunities to take part in large group activities, in some small group activities and in individual experiences. In the course of a day each child has opportunities for physical exercise, for music, art, practical life activities (cleaning tables, shining shoes, polishing silverware), sensorial experiences, reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry, science and social studies. The child is also given opportunities to experience the beauty of nature and the serenity of silence.

Like the Cognitively Oriented Preschool, the Montessori school stresses the importance of concrete experience. The materials in a Montessori preschool are modeled after the materials used in the original children's house. Some of the materials are designed to help in the training of the child's sensory capabilities. Training in visual perception is accomplished by use of the Montessori "didactic" materials—the knobbed cylinders, the pink tower and the broad stair. These materials teach the child to attend to small differences in length, width or height. They are designed to control for error. If the

child picks up the wrong cylinder, it will not fit in the hole. Training in auditory perception is accomplished by use of the sound cans or the Montessori bells. Training in tactile perception is provided by the sandpaper tablets and graded weight tablets. These are only examples of some of the materials used to develop the senses.

A second major area stressed in the Montessori preschool is academic learning. Mathematics is taught by manipulation of concrete materials in a prescribed sequence under the careful supervision of the teacher. Reading and writing are taught by using a movable alphabet that allows the child to write the words he sees or hears.

Preschools based on the four models that we have described can be found today in all areas of the country. The question that inevitably arises as these preschools are discussed is which one works best. The government tried to answer this question by looking at a Head Start Follow Through Program called Planned Variations. The outcome of the evaluations was very much as educators had expected all along. No one model worked best for all children and no one model out-performed the other models on all measures of success.

In most preschools and nurseries today teachers are moving away from adopting a model curriculum. Partly because of budget and partly because of philosophy, a majority of early learning programs are "eclectic," deriving their curriculum from more than one source.

An advantage of eclecticism is that it allows teachers to tailor their teaching techniques to the needs of individual children.

In the sections ahead we do not advocate a particular model or a particular curriculum. Instead we describe the kinds of competencies that children should achieve during the preschool years and suggest materials and activities that can be introduced to help children achieve these competencies.

SCENE II

CONCEPTS ABOUT THE WORLD

A Short Story

Vanessa's grandmother brought her two beautiful new dresses for her birthday. The day after her birthday, Vanessa wore one of the dresses to nursery school. "What a beautiful dress!" her teacher commented as soon as Vanessa walked into the room. "Red dress," Vanessa repeated. "That's right. It's a red dress. You are learning your colors." The next day Vanessa wore the other new dress to school. "Red dress," Vanessa repeated, as she proudly showed her dress to her teacher. "No, Vanessa, it's not a red dress. This dress is blue." Vanessa was disappointed and confused. The last time she called a new dress "red", the teacher was happy. Today she called a new dress "red" and the teacher was sad.

Vanessa's problem with learning color names is a very common one. She could remember the word red and connected it with dress. She did not know what aspect of the dress red stood for. The guess she made was perfectly logical from her point of view. The most special thing about her dress was its newness, so red, she decided, meant "new".

Before children can name the color of an object, they have to figure out what we mean by color. Actually, color is a complicated concept involving several insights.

1. RED, GREEN, BLUE, etc. are all names of colors.
2. Color is a property of objects just the way size and shape are properties of objects.
3. The answer to "what color is it?" must be one of the color names. It cannot be a size name, like big or a shape name, like square.
4. Colors that are not the same sometimes have the same name (light blue and dark blue) and sometimes have different names (dark blue and purple).

Categorizing objects according to color is one of the many ways in which young children learn about real world objects. In this section we are concerned with the development of thinking skills that help a child acquire concepts about the physical world. These skills include sorting objects into categories, placing objects in a logical sequence and identifying patterns or relationships.

Sorting Objects Into Categories

In a manner of speaking, the very youngest infants categorize experiences. Newborn infants are programmed to discriminate between voices and other sounds. By six weeks old they respond differently to voices showing a preference for the sound of their mother's voice over the voice of a stranger. During the infancy period these sorting skills become more sophisticated. Children learn to recognize familiar faces, a skill that requires comparing the new face that they see with an earlier memory of a face.

Preschool children continue to develop more sophisticated sorting skills. As they play with objects and look at pictures they put like objects together and discover pictures that match. Sometimes this ability to recognize a match creates a problem in the family. The toddler may make a fuss if the cup he is drinking from doesn't match the other cups or if a sibling receives a present that does not exactly match his.

When children have become proficient in matching objects and pictures they are ready to sort objects on the basis of their properties, such as color and shape. We see children group objects together that are the same color, but have different shapes or group same objects together even though their color is different. At the beginning children may start off with the notion of color or shape but lose the basis of the sort as the sorting task continues. In other words, children may begin to put red objects in a pile but then add a green triangle because it looks like the red triangle that they placed in the pile.

We have been talking so far about sorting objects according to the way they look. It is also possible to sort objects into non-visual categories, such as where they belong, how they are used, or what they are called. Some toys belong in the house and some toys stay outside. Some food goes on the shelf and some food goes in the refrigerator. Some clothes are for cold days and some clothes are for hot days. Some kinds of food are called fruits and some kinds of foods are called vegetables. Through everyday experience children continually learn new ways of categorizing objects and events.

We have talked about children sorting objects according to how they look, forgetting the basis of the sort. The child who started putting all the red things together began adding the triangles to the pile, forgetting about their color. Another problem that children have with sorting is understanding about things belonging in more than one category at the same time. Can something be both an apple and a piece of fruit? Can a teacher be a mother? Can a grandma really be a mother's mother? Many of the activities that we do carry out in a preschool are designed to help children develop more sophisticated sorting skills.

Activities To Help Children Develop Sorting Skills

1

Materials: Cardboard tray with pairs of small objects (small cars, blocks, little people, balls).

What do do: Pick up one object from the tray. Ask the child to find one that is the same. If the child selects an object that is different, say, "that one is not the same. I will help you find one that is the same. Here it is. We found one that is the same."

With a small group: Give each child in the group one of a pair of like objects. Pass the tray around to the group. Let each child select an object that is the same as the one he or she has.

2

Materials: Make sets of matching cards by cutting pictures out of two identical catalogs. Laminate or cover with clear contact paper.

What to do: Follow the same procedure used with a tray of small objects. When several children have the concept of matching, place trays with sets of pictures within reach on the shelf so that the children can play alone.

Activities To Help Children Sort According To Color

1

Materials: Peg board with pegs of different colors.

How to play: Let the children help you arrange the peg board in color rows.

If the three-year old had difficulty with the idea of making a row, the board can be covered by the teacher so that only one row is visible.

After the child is adept at arranging pegs in color rows, the games of "Guess What's Wrong" and "Guess What's Missing" can be played with individual children or in small groups. The children close their eyes as two pegs are switched and then guess which two have been moved. In "Guess What's Missing," one of the pegs is removed from the color rows and the child guesses what color it is.

2

Clothespins can be painted bright colors that match sections of a large can, a box or a round cardboard.

3

Little houses can be made from small milk cartons by covering them with construction paper to correspond with the colors of the Counting Teddy Bears. Doors can be cut and the children can "help the teddy bears find their houses."

4

Materials: Make a board with different colored flower pots cut from construction paper. A stem and outline of the flower is drawn with a black magic marker.

The flowers are cut from matching construction paper. They can be attached by gluing metal washers to the board (in the center of the flower outline) and gluing magnets to the back of the flowers.

5

A color walk or shape walk may be taken through the classroom or outdoors. The children identify "all the circles" or "all the things that are blue," etc.

Helping Children Sort According To Shape

Materials: Two sheets of tag-board, one cut in a circle and the other cut in a square. Catalog cut-outs of round things and square things (plates, clocks, boxes, blocks).

How to play: Give children turns finding round things and square things to fit on the circle and the square.

1

Materials: Cut out a large tag-board hand and foot. Cut out pictures from a magazine of things that go on a hand (gloves, mittens, rings) and things that go on feet (socks, stockings, shoes and boots).

How to play: Let the children place the cut-outs on the hand or foot.

2

Materials: Plastic farm animals and zoo animals and a sand box.

How to play: Help the children build a farm on one side of the sand box and a zoo on the other side. Let the children place each animal in either the zoo or the farm.

3

Materials: Make books that are shaped to represent a concept (a truck could stand for transportation, a fruit bowl could stand for fruit and a suitcase could be used for clothes).

Shaped covers are cut from construction paper. The books can be put together by lacing with yarn, stapling or using paper fasteners.

How to play: Let children sort through old magazines and catalogs to find pictures for their books.

Discovering Order and Sequence

At the same time that children are learning to put things into categories they are learning about order. A child who sorts a box of buttons into small buttons, medium size and big buttons is also learning to put things in order according to size. When we think about ordering we usually think about

ordering in space according to size or ordering in time according to clock units or calendar units. Actually, any quality we can think of, any adjective that is used to modify a noun, implies the possibility of ordering. A heavy object can be somewhat heavy, heavy, or very heavy. A flower can be pretty, very pretty or beautiful. An odor can be mild, strong or very strong.

When preschool children first place objects in order of size it may be accidental. They push three blocks together in ascending order and decide that it looks like a staircase. Children are able to recognize order by the way something appears before they understand the logic of order. Understanding the logic of order implies the recognition that each element has more of a certain quality than the element that precedes it and less of the quality than the object that comes after it. Before children can understand the logic of order they need to have many different opportunities to arrange objects according to different dimensions.

Activities To Help Children Develop Ordering Skills

1

Materials: Stacking blocks or a stack of cans (make sure there are no rough edges).

How to play: Demonstrate ways of stacking the blocks (cans) together or making a tall tower by beginning with the largest block or can.

2

Materials: Stacking toys.

How to play: Demonstrate how to place rings on the spindle so that the larger rings go on the bottom and the smaller layer on top.

3

Materials: Montessori knobbed cylinders.

How to play: The Montessori cylinders are excellent toys for learning order. The cylinders vary on two or three dimensions (circumference and depth). The child must order the cylinders according to depth, circumference or both in order to complete the puzzle.

Other materials that encourage ordering include the color tablets (order by shade), the basic toy (order by weight), the texture blocks (order by degree of roughness or smoothness), the Montessori chimes (order by pitch).

4

Materials: Table blocks of varying length.

How to play: Demonstrate several different ways of building a block staircase (horizontal, vertical, starkdale).

5

Materials: Objects that involve matching and ordering (sets of cups and saucers of different size, plastic bottles with lids medium size and dolls of different sizes with doll clothes).

How to play: As children play freely with these objects they learn to recognize that the smallest cup fits on its smallest saucer, the next size cup on the next size saucer.

6

Materials: Sequence puzzles. Buy or make puzzles that require sequencing according to size. Puzzles can be made that require double sequencing. Example—out of tagboard create a puzzle with dolls and ladders. The smallest doll gets the highest ladder.

How to play: Let the children complete the puzzle by trial and error. After a while they will recognize the appropriate order.

The more experience children have with manipulating real world objects the more proficient they become at putting objects into categories. At the same time, manipulating real objects helps children recognize ways in which objects relate to other objects. A child playing with a toy car and a plank discovers that the speed at which the car rolls is determined by the angle of the plank. A child bouncing a ball discovers that the height of the rebound is related to the force of the bounce.

We have talked so far about sorting, ordering and discovering relationship in a very concrete way. Actually, it is possible to think of all of the concepts

the child will acquire in the course of a lifetime based on those fundamental skills. Relationships can be physical or psychological, social or temporal, numerical or geometric. The more opportunities that children have to acquire thinking skills in a concrete way, the more adept they will be at mastering concepts on a sophisticated level.

Science Concepts

We have talked so far about sorting, ordering and discovering relationships. In a sense we have been describing the basic building blocks of a science curriculum. Scientists categorize plants, animals, minerals and other physical phenomena according to shared attributes. They discover the order in which things happen in time or occur in space. They discover ways in which one set of phenomena or events relates to another set of phenomena or events. As preschool children are given opportunities to sort out and manipulate objects and materials they are learning the basic skills of the scientist.

There is one aspect of scientific thinking that we have not mentioned as yet. The scientist uses what she knows to discover what she does not know. She develops a hypothesis and then carries out experiments to see if this hypothesis is correct. In other words, the scientist continues to ask "if-then" kinds of questions. "If-then" questions are difficult for young children to ask in an abstract way, but they do ask these questions in a concrete way. The child who places the plank on more of an angle to see if the marble will slide down faster is asking an "if-then" kind of question. A scientific environment for young children provides many different opportunities to make "if-then" investigations.

Suggestion Material To Invite Scientific Investigation

1. Water table containing funnels, sieves, a water pump, see-through containers of different sizes and slopes, ladles, gravy tubes, clear plastic tubing, soap bubbles, food coloring.

2. A balance scale with dishes of small objects that can be placed on the pans.

3. A standing magnifying glass with a basket next to it full of interesting material to look at (shells, rocks, cones, bark, nuts, postage stamps).

4. A large magnet with a basket of steel and non-steel materials.

5. A water tub with a tray of objects, some that float and some that do not float.

6. A tray of different kinds of clay, dough and plaster, some that hardens and some that stays soft.

Social Studies Concepts

Sometimes when we think of social studies we think of geography, history and political science. Young children cannot think about things that are remote in time and space, nor can they think about things that involve abstract principles, systems or rules. They are interested in things that are happening and people that are making things happen in their immediate world. The social studies curriculum, like the science curriculum, must deal with the concrete and the immediate. It must provide children with opportunities to categorize people and events to find out about the order of things and to discover relationships.

Here are some sample units that can be included in a social studies curriculum:

Family Unit

Because a child's family, no matter what the size or composition, is the most important thing in her life, a social studies unit on the family is always appropriate.

Suggested Activities:

- *Create Family Albums:* Let children bring in pictures of different members of their families. Create family albums in which different color pages are used to show different generations. Construct a family tree using family pictures.

- *Make Individual Books Called "All About My Family".* An "All About My Family Book" can contain pictures of things the family does together (plays ball, eats dinner, watches TV). You can include holidays the family shares, places the family goes together (the supermarket, a restaurant, the beach).

Transportation Unit

Children are very interested in all kinds of vehicles and a unit on transportation provides limitless opportunities for interesting activities.

Suggested Activities:

- *Truck Day:* Invite people with different kinds of trucks to come to your school. Talk about ways in which the trucks differ from each other and help the children discover reasons for the differences. (Some trucks have double sets of back wheels.)
- *Field Trips:* Take a bus ride, a trolley ride or a train ride with the children. Visit an airport, a bus terminal or a train station. Take a walk around the school and see how many different kinds of transportation you see. Did you see bicycles, motorcycles, buses, delivery trucks, moving vans, garbage trucks?
- *Pretend Play:* Create an airport in the classroom in the imaginative play corner. Include as props a scale, suitcases, tickets, luggage tags, purses, wallets, money, etc. Role play airplane trip with the children.
- *Music Time:* Sing songs about different kinds of transportation (The Wheels On The Bus, Row, Row, Row Your Boat, I've Been Working On The Railroad, Yankee Doodle, Jingle Bells).
- *Craft Time:* Make transportation books in which the child cuts out pictures of trucks, boats, airplanes, cars, etc. and glues them into the book. Make trucks out of cracker boxes by letting the children glue on wheels and cut out or paste on windows. Make a license plate for the back of the truck. Construct a train in the classroom by cutting out large cardboard boxes. Put chairs in a row so children can sit on the train and look out of the windows.

Health, Nutrition and Safety Unit

The classroom teacher who is careful to live up to all the standards established by the health and fire departments may feel that she is doing her best to protect the well being of children. We would agree that meeting these standards is essential, but we also would emphasize the importance of helping children take responsibility for their own health and safety.

Suggested Activities: (Health)

- *Doll Play:* Set up a doll bath in the classroom. Give the doll a bath in front of the children. Talk to the doll about the importance of washing its face first or making sure that you wash between the toes, etc. Give the children a chance to wash the doll, praising them for remembering the correct order and for making sure all parts get cleaned.

- *Circle Time:* Pantomime a hand-washing activity going through the following steps:
  1. Wet your hands.
  2. Lather them with soap.
  3. Rub them over and under—don't forget between the fingers.
  4. Rinse the soap and replace it.
  5. Rinse your hands and shake the water in the sink.
  6. Now dry your hands and dispose of the towel in the waste basket.

- *Sing-A-Long:* Sing these words to the tune of "Mulberry Bush":

  "This is the way I wake up and yawn,
  I wake up and yawn,
  I wake up and yawn.
  This is the way I wake up and yawn so early in the morning."

  Variations:

  Wash my face
  Put on my clothes
  Eat my breakfast
  Brush my teeth
  Go to school, etc.
  Go back home
  Eat my dinner
  Take my bath
  Go to sleep

Suggested Activities: (Nutrition)

- *Pretend Play:* Set up a restaurant in your classroom. Provide appropriate props such as chef hats, aprons, menus, trays, pads and pencils, pretend food, napkins, place settings and a cash register. Join the play as the waitress or the parent so that you can talk about ordering healthy foods.

•*Crafts:* Help children construct their own food books by cutting pictures out of the newspaper or magazine. Make a book for dairy products, for meat, for fruit and for vegetables.

Suggested Activities: (Safety)

•*Crafts:* Make a traffic light out of a quart size milk bottle. Paste red, yellow and green squares of construction paper on one side.

•*Pretend Play:* Take the children for a safety walk on the playground. Pretend the path is a busy street. (If you do not have a path on your playground, make a path out of rope.) Use a yard stick with red on one side and green on the other. Teach the children to walk to the end of the road. stop and wait to cross until the light turns green.

Other Ideas for Social Study Units:

The possibility of developing social studies themes that are interesting and important to children is almost endless. Social studies themes may be developed around:

•The places people live.
•The jobs people do.
•The kinds of stores we have in our city.
•Places we like to visit (the farm, the beach, the zoo, etc.)
•The holidays we celebrate.
•All kinds of machines.
•Things that go up in the air.
•What happens to a letter.
•Different kinds of clothes.
•The different kinds of lights.

Once you have decided to develop a theme for your classroom, invite the children's parents to help you think of different ways of expanding it.

SCENE III

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Just before a recent election, Jamie, who is four and a half, explained how the process works:

"Well, you see, there are these two people named Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan who want to be president. There's going to be a race and the one that wins is going to live in Washington in a white house. Only one person can win the race. It's not going to be a race in cars; they are going to run. The one that loses has to find some place else to live."

This anecdote points up two aspects of children's language. First, it shows how much in tune children are with the language that is spoken around them. Obviously, Jamie does not understand what an election is, but he has picked up some key words and is able to repeat them. Second, it shows how children interpret the language they hear in a very concrete way. Jamie did not recognize the metaphorical interpretation either of running a race or of living in the White House.

Although children cannot learn a language unless they hear it spoken, learning a language involves much more than the imitation of adult speech. The basis of language is real world experiences. Until a child has had experience with the thing that a word stands for, a word has no meaning for him and cannot be used to communicate.

When a child has had experience with a variety of objects, actions and people and when he has heard an adult use language to label these events, the child is prepared to enter the first phase of expressive language, the one word stage. In this state, called "holophase", the baby uses language to label the things he sees. The first things he labels are things that are very important to him. Most of baby's first words can be classified as:

•People and animals he loves—Mommy, Daddy, Nana, Papa, Kitty and Dolly.
•Things to eat or drink—bottle, milk, juice, cookies, bananas.

•Things that can be manipulated—keys, bell, car, boat, ball, light, shoe, sock.

Things in the child's environment that do not change and cannot be manipulated are apt to come much later—floor, ceiling, carpet, bushes, dashboard, dress.

A second characteristic of the holophase is that single words stand for whole sentences. "Up" means Pick me up. "Shoe" may mean put on my shoe, take off my shoe, or that's a shoe—depending, of course, on the context.

Sometime between 18 months and two years old most children move from the one word stage to the two word stage. The two word stage, as Roger Brown from Harvard pointed out, is a real leap beyond the one word stage. The child who puts two words together is doing more than remembering two words at a time. He is expressing a relationship between the two words. Let's look at some typical two word phrases.

Child's Two Word Phrases	Translation	Relationship
My shoe	This shoe belongs to me.	possession
Kick ball	I am kicking the ball.	action-object
Big ball	The ball is big.	attributive
All gone juice	There is no more juice.	non-existence

As we think about these two word phrases we realize that the child is expressing the relationship by the order of the words as well as the selection. We would not hear a child say "cookie want," or "ball kick," or "shoe my."

In the next stage of language development the child strings two to three words together. "That my shoe," "Baby kick ball," and "I want cookie." At this stage the baby's meaning is clear. His sentences, for the most part, include a subject, a verb and an object. This speech, of course, is still different from adult speech because the little words are left out. It is called "telegraphic" because, like a telegram, words are omitted that do not carry meaning.

Psycho-linguists, who study the stages of speech development in young children, point up several facets of early speech that are important to parents and caregivers.

1. Children do not parrot back the words they hear. Their language is an original creation or construction.

2. Children have their own grammar or consistent word order that is not the same as adult grammar.

3. When children listen to adult speech they tune into its meaning and not its form. Correcting a child's grammar does not make sense because the child is focusing on the communication and does not recognize that there are correct and incorrect ways of expressing the same meaning. The same thing is true about correcting articulation. The child attends to the meaning of a sentence, not to the way it sounds. Correcting a child's articulation is completely ineffective. Here is an example of a conversation between a mother and a child.

Abbie: "Mommy! Mommy!, my whole plate of ski-te falled on the floor!"

Mommy: "Oh, Abbie, I can't turn my back on you one minute. Listen Abbie, your spa-get-te fell on the floor."

Abbie: "I know mommy, there it is!"

*Mommy: "No, no, say **spa**"*

Abbie: "spa"

*Mommy: "Now say **get**"*

Abbie: "get"

*Mommy: "Now say **te, Spa-get-te**"*

Abbie: "Spa-get-te"

Mommy: "Very good!"

Abbie: "Mommy, I'm sorry my skit-te falled."

Although an adult cannot improve a child's articulation or grammar by correcting his speech, the adult does play a critical role in helping a child develop language.

1. The adult provides the child with real world experiences which are the basis of language development. This experience includes opportunities to manipulate objects, to practice motor skills, to experience a variety of sights and sounds, to visit new people and see new places, to hear stories, poems and songs, to see and create pictures.

2. The adult uses words in a meaningful context so that the child can discover that words stand for real world things or events.

3. The adult serves as a good speech model, exposing the child to correct grammar and pronunciation.

If we accept the child's language and avoid the pitfall of correcting pronunciation and grammar, the child, in time, learns to speak correctly. It seems that children have an innate ability to abstract the rules of grammar and articulation and apply these rules to their own original sentences. When Abbie apologized because her "skit-te falled", her use of the word "falled" demonstrated how much she already knew about language. Abbie recogized that the "ed" sound at the end of a word was a way of indicating that something happened in the past. Abbie made this kind of connection. "I kick the ball today." "I kicked the ball yesterday." "I fall down today." "I falled down yesterday." Abbie had never heard her parents use the word "falled." Her use of the word was a logical application of a rule. It will take several years for Abbie to realize that there are exceptions to rules and to know when these exceptions apply.

4. Adults model not only the form of language for children but also uses of language. As they listen to adults use language in a variety of ways, children learn that language is used to:

- •Give commands or directions
- •Ask questions
- •Provide information
- •Describe things that happen
- •Greet people
- •Express how you feel
- •Tell jokes and stories
- •Sing songs and have fun

5. Finally, and most important, adults serve as good listeners and good audiences. They provide an emotional climate that encourages children to share information and feelings.

How important language is! It is not only the means by which the child communicates his wants and his feelings, transmits interpretation, builds social and emotional ties with others, but it is also an important tool for learning.

Activities to Promote Language Development

One of the most effective techniques to encourage children's verbal expression is, perhaps, one of the least used by adults. It is simply to listen quietly and attentively when a child is speaking and to talk to him, not at him. When an adult has the attitude of respect for the child as an individual who has something interesting to share, the exchange is mutually rewarding and reinforcing. One way to extend this technique to a group setting is to have a planning time at the beginning of the day to discuss the activities for that day. The children may have some ideas the teacher hasn't thought of. At the end of the day have a time to recall and talk about what has happened that day, the good things, the bad things, share ideas, ask questions, and express feelings.

One of the favorite activities of both teachers and students is "Story Time". Each class has its own favorites that it never tires of hearing over and over. Once children become familiar with the story it can be presented in different ways, with the children becoming more active participants.

- •Make puppets from paper bags, paper plates, socks or mittens to represent the characters in the story.
- •Use props that the children can manipulate to act out the story as the teacher is telling it.
- •Use a cassette recorder to record the child as he says the lines of his character and then intersperse the recording with the telling of the story. For

example, record the Big, Bad Wolf saying, "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down," and when you get to that point in the story let a child push the button for the dialogue.

If your story-time is not successful, ask the following questions:

1. Did I pre-read the book?
2. Was it appropriate for the age and interest level of the children?
3. Was it too long?
4. Did I allow interaction with the children? Did we discuss the illustrations? Did I ask questions? (ex. What do you think the wolf found when he opened the door?)
5. Was the setting appropriate? Were the children comfortable? Was the room quiet? Were there many distractions?
6. Did I paraphrase if the language was too difficult?
7. Did my voice, facial expression and body language reflect the mood of the story?

Reading from books is important because it allows children to see how the written word is a symbol that has a specific meaning. It is also important for the children to see that we can make up interesting stories as we use our imaginations.

•Display several large pictures cut from magazines and mounted on brightly colored paper. (The National Geographic Magazine is an excellent source for language stimulation pictures.) The children take turns choosing a picture. At first, the teacher tells a story about the picture. Then she gradually encourages the children to help with the story as she asks questions and incorporates their ideas and suggestions into the story. Soon the children will be able to tell a story themselves with little prompting. This is a good language activity for a small group of children.

Other Language Experiences or Activities

•A field trip not only provides new experiences that can expand language, but also gives the children an opportunity to participate in detailed planning before the trip and critical evaluation after the trip.

•Provide opportunities for interaction among the children. Give a specific task to two or three children which will involve cooperative planning (cleaning and preparing tables for a special snack.)

•Encourage children to express their feelings by using paper plate puppets with expressions of anger, sadness, fright, happiness, surprise, excitement, etc. With older children, prepare a chart with a slot for each child's name. As the child comes into the classroom in the morning he places his name on the chart and beside his name he places a circular disc with a face that describes his feelings—happy, sad, angry, etc. At the end of the day at Good-bye Circle Time, each child is given a chance to change the face beside his name if his feelings have changed.

•"My Story"—The teacher interviews the child using the cassette recorder. She then translates what the child has said about himself into short, simple sentences on large poster sized newsprint, leaving room at the top for a polaroid picture of the child. The stories are mounted on the wall to be read and re-read!

•"My Story"—This activity can also be done in book form, with the child providing illustrations.

Building A Classroom Environment That Promotes Language Development

We cannot compartmentalize language activities. There is no area in the classroom that cannot be used in some way to expand the child's vocabulary or encourage him in expressive speech. Here are some examples:

•The block and car area is especially effective as children experience over, under, inside, outside, between, around, beside, on top of, smaller, larger, big, little, long, short, fast, slow.

•The imaginative play area gives children the opportunity for role play. Even normally quiet children often become more talkative in a pretend situation.

•Music activities can be used to develop the child's ability to listen and to imitate. Songs and finger plays enrich children's language.

•Through sensory activities such as tasting, smelling, touching, listening, the child learns that a word is a symbol for an experience (salty, crunchy, soft, rough, smooth, etc.). "Touch and tell" textured pictures can be placed in the sensory area to provide language experiences.

•Even in the area of gross motor activities the child's vocabulary can be expanded as the teacher comments and translates the action taking place into words.

•A table or area can be set up in the classroom that focuses on a theme (zoo animals, community helpers, etc.) or a question. (How do we get milk? Where do letters go?) The children can have an active part in planning and producing the display.

Here are some special tools or props that can be placed in the classroom that foster expressive language.

•telephone in the house area
•cassette recorder that the children can operate by themselves
•puppets and props
•sets of sequence pictures that the children can put together and then tell a story

Simply stated, successful language experiences give children an opportunity to express themselves and their ideas in their own way. A good teacher can stretch and expand these expressions without stifling creativity or spontaneity.

SCENE IV

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Skills Related to Reading

The following conversation was overheard at the supermarket checkout line:

Parent I:
Have you heard what they say about that preschool over on Maple Street?

Parent II:
No, what about it?

Parent I:
Well, they claim that over 50% of the four year olds are reading by the end of the year and almost all the children can read before they begin first grade.

Parent II:
Wow, that sounds terrific! You know, Janie is only three, but I think I'll call about enrolling her.

Parent I:
Good luck! They say the waiting list is so long that parents are filling out applications for admission as soon as their baby is born. I also heard that children who can't keep up with the work are kicked out.

Unfortunately, many parents judge the value of a preschool by how much reading is taught. We disagree with this measure, although we share with parents the belief that reading is important.

A good preschool, from our point of view, paves the way for good readers by providing the child with experiences that:

1. Develop good self-concept and give him self-confidence.
2. Teach the child to follow directions.
3. Help the child to attend to a task until it is completed.
4. Increase the child's use of language.
5. Increase the child's knowledge base.
6. Give him exposure to books, stories, poems.
7. Help the child develop the specific skills that are related to reading success—auditory perception, visual perception and integration.

Let's take a closer look at this set of skills.

Auditory Perception

Although we use all of our senses in gathering information, those that are most critical in the area of pre-reading are hearing and seeing (auditory and

visual). By developing a child's skill in auditory perception he becomes a careful listener and learns to identify the sounds that form words. One of the simplest auditory activities is to match identical sounds.

- Make a set of three pairs of sound cans by using empty film containers or any identical small containers with lids. Use materials such as sand, water, beans, rice, etc. Begin by giving one set of cans to the child with the teacher keeping one set. Teacher shakes one can and child has to find the one that is the same from her set. After the children understand the game, the cans can be placed on a shelf for independent play. Change the contents of the cans each week.

Other activities involve the identification of the source of a sound.

- Make a tape recording of similar sounds. The children listen and guess what makes the sound.
- Ring a bell either behind, in front of or to the right or left side of the child who is blindfolded. He must point to the direction he thinks the sound is coming from.
- Line up four or five different objects—an oatmeal box, coffee can, plastic container, wooden block, etc. Ask the children to close their eyes. Hit one object with a drumstick or spoon. The children must guess which object you hit.
- Take a group of children outside. Encourage them to sit together quietly on the playground, to close their eyes and to see how many sounds they can hear and identify.
- Make a set of picture cards of "things that make a sound"—animals, trucks, cars, appliances, etc. Let the children take turns drawing a card, imitating a sound and letting the rest of the group guess what the sound represents.
- Make a set of rhyming picture cards—cat, hat, shell, bell, key, bee. Color code the backs so that rhyming cards match. Encourage children to find the rhyming pairs. The four or five year old can also identify words that have the same beginning or ending sounds.
- Let the children choose from band instruments and listen as you play a rhythmic pattern—slow-fast, fast-slow, slow-fast, fast. The children then play the same pattern.
- Ask the child to close his eyes and listen as you make three different sounds—ring a bell, hit a drum, shake a tamborine. The child must then repeat the sounds in the same order. This activity involves not only auditory discrimination, but also auditory sequencing as well.

Visual Perception

Much of the information we receive about the world we live in comes to us through our eyes. Our ability to transform what we see into useful knowledge is based on the accuracy of our perceptions and our experimental background. Before a child can read words she must recognize that words are made up of letters lined up in a particular order. She must also realize that some letters are alike and some are different. Recognizing the distinctive features of letters and attending to letter order in words requires the development of visual perception skills. Although the development of these perceptual skills is associated with maturation, we can provide preschool children with practice activities that develop emerging skills.

Here are some visual perception games appropriate for 3 and 4 year olds.

Identify likes and differences:

- Line up three red squares and one yellow square. Ask the child to find the one that is different.
- Put one blue and several yellow teddy bears in a shallow container. Ask the child to find the one that is different.

Match identical shapes:

- Make simple shape boxes from cigar boxes. Cover the boxes with construction paper. On the top of the box and the inside of the lid glue a large cut-out of a shape from an assortment of wooden circles, squares and triangles. Ask the child to place the shapes where they belong. When first introduced all the pieces should be the same size and color. After the child can discriminate between the shapes, vary the sizes and colors of the pieces.

Match identical patterns:

•Follow the leader. Place colored squares or blocks in a pattern (red, blue, yellow). Ask a child to add three blocks to the row in the same color arrangement. Another child adds three more, repeating the pattern, etc.

•Make pattern cards and place them beside containers of beads and strings. Children can string beads to match cards. You can make this task more difficult by varying the shapes of the beads as well as the colors.

Identify pattern changes:

•Line up four counting teddy bears—red, yellow, blue, green. Let the children name each color. Then, while the children close their eyes, remove one and have the children guess which color is missing.

Remember a visual sequence:

•Make sets of identical pictures. One person lays four pictures in a row. The child names the pictures then turns them over and lays his matching set of cards on top of the first set in the same sequence.

Discover spatial relationships:

Children learn about spatial relationships by fitting things together and taking them apart. Puzzles, wooden blocks, interlocking blocks, toys that come apart and fit back together, are useful materials to develop this skill.

•Provide materials in the house area that can be put together and taken apart—jars and lids, several sizes of plastic containers and tops, pots and pans with matching lids.

•A class project could be to draw a large map of the room, building or playground. The class decides where to place cut-outs representing furniture and equipment. During the discussion include some of the following words: next to, beside, between, close to, far away, under, over, up, down.

•A small group activity. Give each child an empty milk carton or small box, scissors, glue and a tray of scraps of materials, construction paper, tissue paper, wallpaper, sandpaper, etc. Let each child decorate his box as he chooses and then describe to the group what he has done. The teacher may have to help by asking some questions. ("Did you put anything inside?" What is next to the red paper?")

Other Ways of Getting Ready for Reading

Reading Readiness Programs:

We have talked so far about preparing children for reading by encouraging language development and by providing practice in tasks that develop visual and auditory perception. Many people believe that the best preparation for reading is the development of skills relating to the alphabet.

Reading readiness books that develop alphabet skills are commercially available. Readiness workbooks provide practice in the following kinds of activities:

1. Matching identical letters and words
2. Matching upper case and lower case letters
3. Identifying rhyming pictures
4. Identifying pictures that begin with the same letters
5. Identifying pictures that end with the same letters
6. Matching pictures with the correct beginning letter

Beginning Reading Programs:

Using a behaviorist technique some commercial companies have developed early reading programs. *The Sullivan Readers*, published by McGraw Hill, teach a progression of reading skills through what is called a programmed learning approach. Reading tasks are broken down into small units and children complete a set of self-corrective reading activities progressing from simple to more complex tasks. Children are encouraged to progress through the workbooks at their own rate. Other reading readiness workbooks, designed for small groups of children, require page by page directions from the teacher.

The Distar reading program, published by Science Research Associates, like the reading workbooks uses behavioral techniques to teach early reading. Unlike the workbooks Distar is a complete teacher directed reading program. Reading lessons are carefully sequenced with the reading teacher following a prescribed script.

Informal Reading Activities:

Many preschools resist using either workbooks or commercial reading programs but do want children to develop reading skills before entering formal school. In the following pages we describe some activities which can be used to teach beginning reading.

•*Sound and Letter Books:* Make individual books for each child by folding and stapling several sheets of paper. Select a letter of the week for each child to cut out and place on the cover of his book. Talk about different objects that start with the letter of the week. Have children draw or cut out pictures of things beginning with that letter.

•*Experience Stories:* Plan a field trip or nature walk for the children in your class. Take pictures of places or events along the way. Let the children help you create a picture book by placing the photos in the correct order. Ask the children to talk about the pictures. Write the children's words under each of the pictures. Read the experience story with the children.

•*Labels:* Label the objects in the classroom. Read the labels out loud to the children. Every once in a while take a label away. See if the children can put it back in the correct place.

•*Lotto Games:* Buy or make a set of lotto boards with pictures of familiar animals or objects on one side of the cards that fit on the lotto board. When you read the lotto cards to the children show them the word before naming the object or animal.

•*Art Projects:* Let the children talk about the things they draw. Write their descriptions on their art work.

•*Story Time:* Buy a set of talking books so that the children can listen to a tape as they follow the pictures and words.

•*Word Banks:* Put familiar words on index cards with pictures on the reverse side. As children learn to read a word they place the card in their word bank.

•*Word Puzzles:* Make a series of word puzzles by backing pictures of familiar objects with the name of the object. Place puzzles on trays on the shelf. Let the children complete the puzzle on the word side. If they select the pieces that go together they can turn the puzzle over to see the picture.

There is no magic number that indicates the age at which a child is ready to learn to read. Because each child is a unique individual the age will vary and will be influenced by the following factors:

1. His understanding of and ability to effectively use language.
2. His development of gross and fine motor skills.
3. His social and emotional development.
4. His background of experiences.
5. His interest in reading and his desire to learn.
6. The opportunities he is given to learn to read.

Getting Ready to Write

Even more than reading, writing requires the development of skills that are related to maturation. Children develop their large muscle skills before they develop small muscle skills. Even if a two year old knew how to form letters and numbers he would not have the small muscle skill or the eye-hand coordination needed to control the pencil and make the appropriate strokes.

Activities for Developing Pre-Writing Skills

•*Dressing Frames or Books:* Provide dressing frames or "Dress Myself" books that give children practice in pulling up zippers, doing up snaps, lacing and buttoning.

•*Sewing Cards:* Make sets of sewing cards by cutting up old greeting cards into interesting shapes and punching holds around the outside. Use wool for threading, making sure to put tape around the ends to make it easier for children to thread.

•*Lock-Boxes:* Create a lock box with different kinds of latches and bolts.

•*Screw and Bolt Activity:* Place nuts and bolts in a box and let children practice putting them together.

•*Rice for a Change:* With a large tweezer let children transfer rice from one container to another.

•*Practical Life Activities:* Children develop strength and coordination by washing tables, drying dishes or polishing silverware.

•*Spinning:* Provide children with spinning toys, like small tops or dreidels that require spinning.

•*Bead Stringing:* Provide children with opportunities to string increasingly smaller beads.

•*Clay:* Encourage children to mold clay into different forms using rolling pins, cookie cutters and plastic knives.

•*Peg Boards, Tinkertoys, Lock Blocks, Bristle Blocks, etc.:* Provide children with a variety of put-together toys and encourage building.

•*Puzzles:* Provide children with alphabet inset puzzles.

•*Sandpaper Letters:* Encourage children to trace letters with their fingers in the sand and to make letters out of clay.

•*Mouse in the House Game:* Create pencil and paper tasks or magnetic boards that require a child to draw a line from one side of the paper to the other.

•*Template Activities:* Provide opportunities for children to create designs using templates of different shapes.

•*Tracing:* Let children trace their own name by placing see through paper over their name on a small clip board.

•*Creating Initials:* Using an ice box cookie recipe let each child create his or her initials.

•*Sponge Play:* Let child use a sponge or eye dropper to change colored water from one container to another.

Learning Number Skills

A Short Story

Johnny, a sturdy three-year old, stood up in the middle of the room and slowly looked around. Grandma and Grandpa smiled encouragingly. Mother nodded her head and said, "Go on, Johnny, let's hear you count." Johnny counted loudly to ten. At the end of this recital there were kisses, hugs, applause and extravagant praise. Johnny laughed delightedly.

The next day at nursery school, Johnny had another "counting" experience.

"That's right, Johnny, one, two, three," the teacher said as he touched each cookie on the plate. "You have three cookies."

Johnny picked up the cookie the teacher had labeled "three" and proudly carried it over to the table, repeating, "Three! Three!"

"No, no, Johnny," he is told, "that is one cookie." Johnny is confused. He looks back and sees "one" still on the plate.

Counting is an enormously complicated idea that takes a long time for children to master. When a child has learned to recite his numbers (count by rote) he has taken the first of many steps.

We have already talked about ways in which young children develop concepts about the physical world by sorting and ordering. A numeral, such as "three", has two meanings. On the one hand it refers to a set of three items. This is called its "cardinal" meaning. On the other hand it stands for the third item in a sequence. This is its ordinal meaning. When children learn to sort into groups and order objects along a particular dimension they are gaining basic insights that will help them learn to count.

In the story of Johnny and the cookies we saw how easy it is for a child to be confused about the ordinal and cardinal meaning of numbers. An even more common problem that children have is moving from counting by rote to counting objects. Counting by rote or learning a number chant is easy for

children. It is a social game that adults enjoy playing with children. Counting objects, however, involves a critical concept that is difficult for children to grasp, "one-to-one" correspondence." One-to-one correspondence means that each object or item gets one and only one count. If a teacher has to help a child count by placing the child's finger on each item as it is counted the child has not learned one-to-one correspondence.

Activities To Develop Number Skills

•*Learning to Count by Rote:* Singing number songs or counting as a group in the classroom teaches the child counting order. Until the child has learned the other counting skills it is better not to teach the child a counting rhyme or chant that goes beyond ten.

•*Learning One-to-One Correspondence.* Give children turns passing out cookies or napkins to the other children. Help the child understand that each child gets one and only one cookie or napkin.

•*Matching Numerals to Sets:* Cut out pictures that have several objects in them. Glue each picture on a large card. At the bottom make a circle and glue a washer on it. Make matching circles with numbers on them and magnets on the back. The child counts the objects and matches the correct circle to the picture.

•*Number Puzzles—To help children understand the ordinal meaning of numbers:* Give children practice filling a bead counter. Provide one of one color, two of a second color, three of the third color, etc. When children first start working with a bead stacker you may want to paint the stacks to match the beads.

•*Match Up:* Make a row of children on a chalk board, magnetic board or flannel board. Give the children turns giving one balloon to each child. Begin a row of block houses. Ask the children to put one roof on top of each house or one tree beside each house.

•*Creating Sets:* Let children create set books or posters. A book of the "two set" would include pictures of things that come in two's (two eyes, a pair of shoes, a cup and saucer and set of twins).

•*Go Fishing:* Make a fishing pole from a dowel stick or the small cardboard tube from a coat hanger. Make the line from string or yarn and the hook from a pipe cleaner. Glue a magnet on the hook. Make construction paper fish and put staples or paper clips on them. On the back of each fish write a number. The children take turns " catching a fish" and calling out the number they have caught. Then let the child place his or her fish on the correct counter in the fish market. The counter is a piece of tag board with a pocket on the bottom. It is color coded to match the fish. If the fish with the numeral 3 on it is blue then it is placed in the third pocket that is also blue.

•*To provide practice with placing numerals in the right order:*

Hang a clothesline low enough for the children to reach easily. Provide clothespins and ten cards with a number on each card. The child hangs the cards up in order from "1" to "10".

•*Small group activity:* Counting caterpillars. Make several individual game boards on which a caterpillar has been drawn. The caterpillar is made of ten circles with a number on each one. A set of matcing circles in a contrasting color is made for each game board. All of the circles are put into a box. The children take turns picking a circle from the box and matching it to their boards. If the circle is already covered the child must return the circle to the box.

SCENE V

MOTOR SKILLS

A Short Story

Mrs. Mathews had decided to place Bill in Little Follies Play School. She was just finishing an extended visit with Billy's teacher, Miss Janice, by giving her some last minute instructions.

"And, by the way," she continued, "I don't want Bill spending too much time outdoors playing. That playground looks very dusty and I don't want to take chances with his allergies. Furthermore, I am against all the stress you people place on sports. I want my Bill to grow up with a good mind and I don't care a bit whether or not he grows up to be an athlete!"

The following day Billy arrived in school. Much to Miss Janice's surprise, Billy got along well with the other children. When playground time arrived, he ran out enthusiastically with a group of active boys and joined them in a spaceman game on the jungle gym. At the end of the playground period, he was redfaced, dusty and full of happy chatter.

Billy's mother arrived to pick him up. Miss Janice made some attempt to dust him off with a feather duster. It didn't work very well. Mrs. Mathews' first words were, "Oh, I see you let him go out on the playground." "Yes," Billy added with great gusto. "And I climbed on the jungle gym and I was Darth Vader and I jumped off the jungle gym and I---." Mrs. Mathews had a dark look in her eyes as her son prattled.

Miss Janice decided not to be defensive. "Yes, Mrs. Mathews. I did let Bill go out on the playground. He had a very good time and it did not bother his allergies. Bill is an extremely well coordinated youngster and he enjoys active play. You know that contrary to what many people believe, bright children are usually healthier and more athletic than less bright children. Intellectual development and physical development frequently go hand in hand."

Mrs. Mathews was interested. All of a sudden she forgot about Billy's allergies and dusty clothes.

Miss Janice was quite correct. The development of motor skills is a critical component of a good preschool curriculum. The very fact that children spend so much of their time practicing motor skills suggests the importance of physical development. Furthermore, children themselves attach great importance to motor skill achievements. Parents who accompany their preschoolers to the playground or a swimming pool are constantly bombarded with cries of, "Watch me, Mommy." "Look at me, Daddy." Each new motor achievement is a source of pride for young children.

In planning activities to develop gross motor skills, it is important to remember that children, like adults, need variety and change of pace. They need to have free play activities where there are opportunities to socialize and make up rules, as well as guided activities where they listen to and follow directions. They need to have slow paced activities where energy is channeled and faster paced activities where energy is expended.

Motor skill development is important in the preschool for many reasons. As children learn to control their body in space and master motor feats along with their peers they are:

1. Developing body awareness
2. Improving balance
3. Learning about position in space
4. Improving throwing, catching and jumping skills
5. Developing imagination

Developing Body Awareness

"This Old Man" with appropriate hand movements.

This old man, he said one.
He played nick-nack on my thumb etc.

This old man, he said two.
He played nick-nack on my shoe.

This old man, he said three.
He played nick-nack on my knee.

This old man, he turned red.
He played nick-nack on my head.

This old man, he liked deers.
He played nick-nack on my ears.

See if the children can add any rhymes.

Other Action Songs & Rhymes

"Miss Polly Had a Dolly"
"Simon Says"
"Looby Loo"

Improving Balance

Cross Over the Stream: Use carpet strips, or pieces of tag board as stepping stones. Play follow the leader across the stream cautioning the children about getting wet.

Toe the Line: Place a tape measure on the floor securing each end with masking tape. Ask the children to walk over the line like little mice. When the children have learned to walk forward on the line, vary the activity—

Walk backwards
Walk sideways
Walk on tip toes
Walk with your eyes closed

Walk the Plank: Repeat Toe the Line activities using a plank or balance board.

Learning About Position in Space

Obstacle Course: Set up an obstacle course by weaving a string in and out of the tables and over and under chairs. Encourage the children to follow the course.

Formation: Draw a circle out of chalk or make a circle out of strips. Use red and yellow ribbons and distribute to the children, giving every other child the same color. Explain to the children that when the music stops red ribbons take a giant step into the circle and yellow ribbons take a giant step out of the circle. When the music starts up again everyone takes a giant step back in the circle and walks around it. Make the activity more difficult by playing faster music.

Improving Throwing, Catching and Jumping Skills

Circle game with large ball: Let children sit in a circle with legs stretched out toward the center. The teacher rolls the ball to each child and encourages the child to roll the ball back. At first roll the ball to the children, going from left to right. When the children have become adept at catching and returning the ball play the same game with the children standing in a circle.

Tether Ball: Place a rubber ball on a bench, bag or net and hang it from the ceiling. Let the children bat at the ball with a foam bat.

Bean Bag Toss: Let children toss a bean bag into a waste paper basket or carton. When they become skilled at this draw a clown with a large mouth on the side of the carton and let the children "feed the clown".

Crossing the Stream: Give two children the task of holding the ends of a skipping rope. Let the children jump over the rope when it is on the floor. Gradually raise the height of the rope.

Developing Imagination

Encourage the children to play a variety of pretend motor activities such as:

Jog in place
Play skating in a circle
Swimming in place
Fly around the room like birds
Hop like rabbits
Crawl like a baby

Motor Skills Time Table

When I was three years old I could:

Climb stairs using alternating feet

Walk on a balance beam

Walk on a straight line

Stand on one foot for five seconds

Ride a tricycle

Jump off a stair with my feet together

And now I am four

I can run, jump and climb with ease

I can dance

I can walk downstairs alone

I can ride a tricycle very well

A five year old can:

Throw and catch a ball

March in time to music

Climb, jump and skip

Jump rope

Ride a two wheel bike

Balance on roller skates

Roll over like a dog
Kick like a baby
Do the bicycle on your back
Kick a pretend football
Pretend to fly a kite
Pretend to catch a high ball

Outdoor Activities to Improve Motor Skills

The playground is especially appropriate for gross motor activities that require space, equipment or climbing structures. The following types of equipment are especially desirable:

- Wheel toys and riding path
- Climbing structure that is safe, provides space for several children and encourages imaginative play.
- Planks and large blocks that the children can use to create their own structures.
- Small tires or spindles that can be rolled. Larger tires that can be used for jumping.
- Tire swings
- Tunnels
- Balance beams and log walks

SCENE VI

DEVELOPING CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION

A Short Story

Miss Sue looked around the room sharply, a slight frown creasing her brow. Her glance seemed to rest briefly on each child.

"We will not begin until everyone is absolutely quiet and still."

A hush fell upon the room. Then, suddenly, twenty sets of small eyes turned in unison toward a loud crashing sound coming from the end of one of the long tables.

"Johnny, if you would sit like I told you, with both feet on the floor and both hands folded together on top of the table, you would not keep falling out of your chair."

Miss Sue rolled her eyes heavenward as if to say, "Why me, Lord?", released a long sigh, and went on with her talking.

"I am giving each of you a sheet of paper to color. There are five flowers in a pot. Across each flower is written the word that tells you what color that flower should be. If you can't remember what the words say (she paused and glanced pointedly toward Johnny), then look at the chart on the wall. Remember to work without talking and try to stay within the lines. When you finish bring your paper to me to be checked. If you have colored neatly and correctly, you may then go outside to play. If not, you'll have to do the paper over until you get it right. All right, you may begin."

Miss Sue sat down at her desk and checked off "reactive activity" on her lesson plan.

This story, of course, is an exaggeration of obvious "no-no's." Read through it again and see how many you can pick up. Now let's look at some productive ways of encouraging creativity.

Creativity in Art

1. Encourage children to be spontaneous.

Children's art products should be an expression of their own feelings and their own perceptions. When we give children stencils to color in or examples to follow, we make them dissatisfied with their own creations and stifle their creativity. Unfortunately, even under the best of circumstances, many children lose their spontaneity as they grow older when their attention turns to copying reality.

2. Recognize that the process is more important than the product.

For children, painting a picture or molding a piece of clay is an ongoing dynamic activity. Young children love to watch the paint as it spreads over the paper or feel the texture of the clay as it slides through their fingers. It doesn't bother them at all if their multicolored pictures turns into a great big glob. The fun was in the doing.

3. Don't persist in asking children to tell you about their picture.

Often we hear teachers say, "Oh, I never ask a child to tell me what he has painted. I just ask him to tell me about his picture." Unfortunately, no matter how we phrase the question, when we ask a child to describe a picture we assume the picture is about something. Perhaps in order to please us the child will look at his picture and give it a name, but that doesn't tell us about the picture. How can a child explain a painting that is a swoop of his arm, a twist of the brush, a daring splash of paint, followed by a drip and a dabble?

4. Don't insist that a child complete the product.

Because the child is concerned with the process, not the product, a picture is completed when the child has completed the process. Filling up the paper may not be important to the child.

5. Try not to be over exuberant about a child's creations.

When we tell children that their picture is beautiful, we are making a value judgment that may not be appropriate. Sometimes children will contradict our judgment because they want us to repeat the compliments. At other times, however, the child may not be happy about the picture and the teacher's praise is distressing. What really matters is the way the child feels about his or her art.

6. Provide opportunities to experiment in a variety of media.

Each medium that children use—chalk, crayon, finger paint, water color, poster paint, has its own special characteristics, providing a different kind of opportunity for creative expression. Finger paint is especially good for expressing feelings of exuberance. Poster paint affords an opportunity to express a feeling of power. Crayon or chalk gives children a sense of being in control. By allowing children to explore in a variety of media we give them a chance to match the media to their moods or discover the medium that feels best to them.

Creativity with Crafts

Although the product may not be important when the child is involved in an art activity, the exact opposite is true about crafts. Young children love the idea of bringing home a Mother's or Father's Day present, a Thanksgiving Turkey or a school-made valentine. But even a craft project can be counterproductive if it is a teacher, rather than a child, activity. No matter how beautiful a product is, it loses some of its value if the teacher has done the work.

Here are some guidelines for selecting crafts for three and four year olds.

1. Select a craft in which the child can do most of the work.

2. Choose something that is not too long or tedious. With a few exceptions, it is better to select a craft that can be completed in one sitting.

3. Make sure that the craft has meaning for the child. Crafts are most apt to have meaning when they are tied in to a unit of study or associated with a life experience.

4. Make sure that the craft is not too elaborate or fragile. Children like the idea of taking something home and get frustrated and unhappy if the craft falls apart before it gets there.

5. Choose a craft that the children enjoy doing.

6. Choose a craft that allows some leeway for individual ideas.

Manipulative Activities

1. Clay (or dough)—for squeezing, pounding, rolling, kneading, punching and patting.

- earth clay—buy in powdered form and mix with water
- play-dough
- salt/flour dough—the children will enjoy making it as much as using it.

2. Fingerpaint—keep a plastic can of water near by. Let children wet hands before they begin.

3. Sensory materials—to smear, hold, squeeze, make designs, pour.

- shaving cream
- whipped cream
- pudding
- cooked spaghetti
- soap flakes
- sand
- water
- cornmeal
- rice
- corn starch

4. Jello building—cut stiff jello into cubes and give to the children on individual trays.

Art Activities

1. *Tearing and pasting:* Before a child learns to use scissors, tearing is a good fine motor activity. This can be an end in itself or part of a planned project. For example, as a part of a unit on food the children could tear brightly colored tissue paper and fill in large outlines of fruits. The children could then arrange them in one display.

2. *Printing:* Use sponges cut into various shapes attached to tongue depressors or popsicle sticks with rubber bands. Finger prints, hand prints, foot prints are fun for children.

3. *Vegetable prints:* Potatoes are especially good.

4. *Puppet Making:*

- Paper plate puppets on sticks
- Finger puppets
- Sock puppets
- Paper bag puppets

5. *Collages:* Using materials found outside—leaves, twigs, acorns, small pebbles, shells, sand, bark, feathers.

- Using things to eat—rice, beans, cereal, macaronies, spaghetti, egg shells, popcorn, seeds.
- Using scraps of fabrics—lace, ric-rac, ribbons, yarn, buttons, beads, sequins.
- Using different types and colors of paper—construction paper, tissue paper, napkins, paper towels, cellophane, wallpaper, gummed circles, doilies.
- Using "odds and ends"—bottle caps, sponge bits, straws, cotton balls, etc.

6. Painting and Drawing:

- Easel painting—on newsprint with large brushes.
- Fingerpainting—try "foot painting" outside on large sheets of craft paper.
  Play a record with a march tempo and let the children dip their fingers in finger paint and "march across" the paper with their fingers.
- Magic markers—use non-toxic colors that wash out and do not stain.
- Chalk—try white chalk on black or dark blue paper for a night time picture or a snow scene.
- Crayons—dittoes and coloring books are great for teachers but not for children. Coloring within someone else's lines might be a good fine motor activity (although it is too advanced for three and four year olds) but it stifles creativity. Better to string beads or cut paper to develop fine motor skills and let children use crayons to make lines, circles and interesting arrangements with colors and space.
- String painting—dip string in paint, lay on one side of the paper, fold over and pull out string.
- Straw painting
- Blob painting—use a small plastic spoon and drop several blobs of paint on the paper, fold it over in half, unfold and let dry.
- Sand painting—drip glue over the paper and, while it is still wet, shake colored sand on the paper.
- Dry tempera painting—dip cotton balls into dry tempera and rub on damp paper.
- Paint on a variety of materials to observe different effects—paper towels, tissue paper, rokes, wood, aluminum foil, shells, corrugated cardboard, cloth, etc.

Craft Activities

There are many good books on the market containing ideas and instructions for making interesting objects from "throw-away" materials. Here are just a few examples:

1. Egg Carton caterpillars.
Materials—Egg cartons, pipe cleaners

2. Egg Carton spiders.
Materials—Egg cartons, pipe cleaners

3. Egg Carton garden.
Materials—Egg cartons, popsicle stick, construction paper. Punch holes in bottom of each small section. Remove the lid and set on the bottom. Fill sections with dirt and plant seed in each.

4. Fish in the Water.
Materials—Styrofoam tray, construction paper, sand, shells, plastic wrap, yarn.

5. Fish in Aquarium.
Materials—Paint, glue, goldfish crackers.

6. Paper Plate Faces.
Materials—Paper plates, construction paper, glue, yarn (or fabric scraps, buttons, bottle caps, etc.). For older children, holes can be punched around edge and yarn threaded through for hair.

7. Baby Chicks in Eggs.
Materials—Egg carton, cotton balls, bits of construction paper. Place three cotton balls in one section of egg carton. Make jagged edges on egg carton to look like egg shell. Use bits of construction paper for eyes and beak on chick.

The Teacher's Responsibility

1. Set up an accessible art center with a variety of materials. Give the child time, space and freedom to explore.

2. Provide a creative climate. The classroom can be aesthetically pleasing, uncluttered, colorful, reflecting the originality and individuality of the teacher and the children.

3. Sensitize the children to the beauty and wonder of the world they live in—from a sweeping rainbow to a drop of dew on a blade of grass.

4. Integrate art activities into the curriculum as a part of the learning experience, not something separate and apart. Example: After a field trip let the children paint a mural to illustrate the things they saw, felt, smelled, heard.

5. Show an appreciation and enjoyment of creative expression.

6. Use creative ways to introduce new concepts. Example: Make a "Hungry Lion" paper bag puppet with a slit for his mouth. The lion can "tell" the children that he "only wants to eat triangles today." Have a box of shapes for the children to choose from.

7. Clearly define responsibility and limits. If at all possible, teach the children how to mix dry tempera paints, wash the brushes they have used, hang their painting to dry, put away all materials and clean up any spillage. The children should know what materials they can use, where they are to be used and when they can use them.

Materials

Materials to buy: crayons, glue or paste, tempera paint (liquid or powdered), easels, brushes (½ to 1 inch width, 10 to 12 inches long), scissors, magic markers (non-toxic, washable colors), paper (craft, white newsprint, construction paper and tissue paper in several colors), chalk

Or make: paint containers (baby food jars set into cut down milk cartons), dough clay, finger paint

Materials to save:

•Containers: egg cartons, berry baskets, cardboard food trays, empty cans, oatmeal boxes, milk cartons, plastic jugs, show boxes, pie pans, margarined tubs

•*Good to have:* tongue depressors, straws, paper towels, paper towel tubes, toilet tissue tubes, popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, toothpicks, cardboard boxes

•*Don't forget:* magazines, newspapers, paper bags, buttons, spoons, bottle caps, stones, shells, coat hangers, clothespins, paper plates

Creativity in Music

Interestingly enough, when we talk about creativity in arts and craft we talk about children's involvement in the creative process. When we talk about creativity in music we are more apt to think of children as the audience, following the directions of

an activity record or participating in a song written by someone else. In both music and art children need both kinds of opportunities—opportunities to be an appreciative audience and opportunities to create on their own.

Producing Music

Obviously, most children of three, four and five do not have the skill to write music or play a standard instrument. But this should not discourage a creative teacher.

1. Rhythm instruments can be created out of every day materials, such as coffee cans, oatmeal boxes, carefully washed out clorox bottles filled with large stones. Once the child has created his or her own instrument, it is easy to encourage children to create their own rhythms. Try sitting a group of five or six children in a circle and let each child have a turn being the rhythm leader.

2. Provide children with an opportunity to smell a flower, taste a piece of fruit, feel a new texture or watch a beam of light as it comes through a prism. Ask the children to describe their experience in words. When children select a descriptive phrase that seems to please them, ask them to say it over and over again. Inevitably their chant becomes a sing-song, their own original rendition.

3. Equip your classroom with easy to play musical instruments. Montessori bells, xylophones and kazoos are particularly appropriate. Encourage children to create their own songs.

Promoting Imaginative Play

An important different between different preschool models is the value placed on imaginative play. Whereas all educators feel that it is important to allow children opportunities for pretending, pretend activities are stressed most in the informal and cognitively oriented preschools and least in the Montessori and the behaviorally oriented preschool.

Imaginative play, according to some researchers, has direct developmental benefits.

•Imaginative play is a way of increasing a child's I.Q. As the child plays imaginatively, he consolidates his ideas about reality, and increases his understanding of real world roles and events.

•Imaginative play helps children develop prosocial behavior. It provides opportunities to communicate with each other, to plan cooperatively, to share responsibility and to take a point of view that is different from their own.[2]

•Imaginative play helps children cope with stress by giving them an opportunity to recreate actual life events. Not only can they replay happy experiences, but in the case of frightening and disturbing events, they can assume the role of powerful people in a safe and new context.[3]

•Imaginative play encourages creativity as children explore new ideas and invent new situations.[4]

•Imaginative play benefits children socially, emotionally, and intellectually. It provides children with the opportunity to develop representations of reality that provide the basis for abstract thinking.[5]

The Role of the Teacher in Promoting Imaginative Play

Imaginative play is promoted in the classroom when:

•The children are provided with a variety of real world experiences that can be recreated in pretend situations.

•The children are given time and space to develop their pretend play ideas.

•Children are provided with a variety of props that can be used for imaginative play.

•The adults in the environment encourage, model and join in imaginative play, but do not take it over. In order for imaginative play to flourish the teacher must be willing to let the children develop and extend their original play ideas.

Imaginative Play Prop Boxes

Imaginative play materials take up a lot of space and many preschools and child care centers do not have space to spare. One solution is to limit

imaginative play props to the housekeeping corner and the "dress-up" area. Another solution is to develop prop boxes which can be changed from time to time.

Suggestions for Prop Boxes:

•*Beach Play*—Sun glasses, suntan lotion, pail, shovel, beach towel, swim ring, picnic basket, thermas, beach ball, thongs, sun hat, pretend food, shells, sand toys.

•*Doctor Play*—Glasses, bag, sheets, white coat, stethoscope, spoon, hypodermic needle case, magic markers, tape, bandages, empty medicine bottles, opthalmoscope, throat sticks, toy thermometer, prescription pad, pencil, toy money, hot water bottle.

•*Fireman Play*—Firehats, hose, siren, bell, pillows, rubber hatchet, play walkie-talkies, megaphone, first aid kit.

•*Restaurant Play*—Trays, menus, cash registers, order pads, aprons, dishes, glasses, silverware, pencils, play food, salt and pepper shakers, creamers and sugar bowl.

Other possibilities for prop boxes include Supermarket, Hair-Dresser, Post Office, Repairman, Dentist and Shoe Store.

SCENE VII

THE CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Managing The Classroom

A Short Story

Mrs. Curtis came to visit the day care center. She found the teacher, Mrs. Owens, sitting with a small group of children reading a rainbow story. In the center of the room four children were sitting in a rocking boat singing, "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat." Several children were trying on old clothes at the far end of the room. In another corner a boy was sitting by himself building a giant block tower. When Mrs. Owens spotted her visitor, she finished the rainbow story and suggested that the children go to the drawing table and color their own rainbow. When all the children had found the crayons they wanted, Mrs. Owens welcomed her guest to the classroom.

Mrs. Curtis looked amazed. "How do you ever do it?", she asked. "You have fourteen children in this classroom and every child seems busy and happy. I've got three kids at home and my house is always in a state of turmoil."

"I've been at it for some time," Mrs. Owens replied modestly.

Although Mrs. Owens made light of her accomplishment, keeping a room of three year olds productively involved in a variety of tasks is not an easy feat. It requires a teacher who is confident, well organized and adept at engineering a classroom. Let us look at some of the ingredients of good classroom management. These include:

1. *Developing a Daily Schedule*
2. *Implementing the Daily Schedule*
3. *Planning for a Rainy Day*
4. *Developing Classroom Rules*
5. *Handling Behavior Problems*
6. *Evaluating Your Efforts*

Developing a Daily Schedule

Whether you are a family day care provider taking care of four children or a nursery school teacher with a class of fourteen, the place to begin good management is with a daily schedule. A schedule is not a curriculum or a daily plan. It does not describe the crafts, lessons or activities that have been scheduled for the day. It does describe the timetable that you have been following, on a daily basis, throughout the year.

Criteria for Developing an Effective Daily Schedule

A daily schedule must take into account the philosophy of the program, the age of the children

you are working with, the size of the group, the length of the day, the time of arrival of the children and the physical set up of the day care facility.

Philosophy. A daily schedule is a reflection of the philosophy of the center. A program that stresses academics will set aside large blocks of time for structured lessons. A program that stresses the development of creativity in art, music and movement will provide time slots in the daily schedule for these activities. A program with a religious orientation may block out time for prayer or religious teaching. A program with a major focus on physical health and nutrition may provide blocks of time for health checks, personal care and the preparation and serving of nutritious snacks.

Age of the Children. All preschool children, whether they are a year old or five years old, are developing their ideas about time. Children can't read a clock or even understand what we mean by minutes and hours. The best way for children to understand time is through routine events. Events that mark off the day include snack time, meal time, playground time and nap time. Because children perceive time as passing at a much slower rate than adults do, for them time is very long. Time markers help them realize that a day goes by in an orderly way and that going home time will come and can be counted on. The younger the child the more important it is to have distinct and predictable time markers. A second way in which a daily schedule takes into account the age of the child, is the amount of time devoted to small and large group activities. Very young children have short attention spans and cannot be expected to participate in a group experience for more than ten or fifteen minutes.

Length of the Day. A schedule for a full or extended program is necessarily quite different from the schedule for a half day program. For a short period of time children and adults enjoy a fast-paced program with quick changes in activities and little time spent in making transitions. For a full day program it is better to increase the duration of activities and take more time moving from one activity to the next. It is also critically important to provide a balanced day alternating quiet activities with activities that are fast-paced and active.

Sample Daily Schedule

Preschool	*Hours—8:30-12:00*
8:30	Arrival, Circle Time, Show and Tell
8:45	Small Group Learning Activities
9:30	Music and Movement
10:00	Snack and Language Development
10:15	Outdoor Play
10:45	Craft Activity
11:30	Clean-up
11:40	Songs, Circle Games, Finger Plays
11:55	Prepare for Home

Implementing the Daily Schedule

Having a workable schedule posted on the wall is a good step—but it is only that. By far the greater challenge is making the schedule work.

Here are some guidelines:

1. Make sure to differentiate between setting up a daily schedule and developing plans. A daily plan describes the curriculum to be implemented during the time slots indicated in the schedule.
2. Make your daily plans at least a week in advance, so that you can make necessary phone calls, purchase supplies or prepare the materials needed.
3. Read plans for the next day before you leave the center and make sure that you have all the material you need.
4. Arrive in your center early.
5. Begin each day by talking about what you are going to do.
6. End each day by going over what you have done and talking about plans for the next day.

Planning for a Rainy Day
or
When the Best Laid Plans Don't Work

No matter how carefully we plan and how well we have thought out our curriculum, there are always days when the greatest plans must be cancelled or our favorite ideas must be scrapped. It rains for the picnic, there's a three alarm fire when the fireman is supposed to come or the exterminator came on the wrong day and no pets are allowed in the classroom. Whatever the problem, it happens to all of us and we should be prepared.

The best way to prepare for a "rainy day" is to have an emergency daily plan with all the appropriate materials put away on the top shelf. Naturally, if you use up your rainy day curriculum, it behooves you to create a new one.

Most of the time plans for a whole day are not cancelled out, but there is some unanticpated down-time. The bus that is taking you to the farm is late, the jello you are finger painting with is too soupy, the film got stuck in your Polaroid camera. You don't need a whole emergency curriculum, but you do need first aid.

Here are some songs and activities that work very well during a down-time.

•*Old MacDonald Had a Farm:* Add variations like an alarm clock that goes dong, a saw that goes buzzz, a fly that goes bzzz, corn that goes pop.

•*When You're Happy and You Know it:* Variations—When you're angry and you know it stomp your feet; When you're sleepy and you know it start to snore; When you're silly and you know it say hee-hee.

•*She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain When She Comes:* Variations—She'll be slicing up red onions when she comes; She'll be riding on a horse fly when she comes.

•*This Old Man, He Played One, He Played Nick-Nack on His Thumb:* Variations—He played nick-nack on his monkey; He played nick-nack on his alligator.

•*Row, Row, Row Your Boat:* Variations—Pump, pump, pump your bike, gently down the hill.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, do not have a spill.
Drive, drive, drive your car, gently down the street.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, pump it with your feet.

Developing Classroom Rules

A well organized classroom depends not only on the organization of the teacher but also on the organization of the children. Young children have a natural sense of order, of things belonging in a special place. They are cooperative about keeping things in order if everyting has its own place. A good and workable classroom rule is to make each child responsible for putting back everything he or she takes out.

Other classroom rules that work well are:

•Each child has a right to knock down his own block structures.

•No child can interfere with another child's work.

Helping Children Who Have Problems

A Short Story

Mr. Jones looked out the window and was surprised to see his wife get out of the car and walk briskly to the house. "What happened to you?", he querried. "You're so full of pep today." "Best day I've had all year", his wife exclaimed. "Every kid in the class was a perfect angel." "That's unusual", Mr. Jones responded. "What did you do different?" "Absolutely nothing", Mrs. Jones chuckled. "Clarence has come down with measles and will be out of school for two weeks."

Obviously, "measles" is not the only cure for behavior problems. If we can just take time off to observe the children in our classroom we will find, not only that the behavior we are watching follows some sort of predictable pattern, but also that something is going on in the classroom to maintain that behavior. Let's look at some typical behavior patterns that are disturbing to a classroom teacher.

The Child Who Is Constantly Bullying Other Children in the Class

As we observe the typical classroom bully we will probably record the following kinds of anecdotes:

Horace and Theobold were digging in the sand under the swing.

Clarence: I want to dig too.
Horace: No.
Theobold: We don't get no more room in the tunnel.

Clarence kicks the sand beside Horace and Theobold. Then he runs to the other side of the playground. "Gimmie the bike", Clarence

insists, as he pulls the tricycle away from Demetria. Demetria starts crying. A teacher interferes. "Clarence, we do not take the bike away from another child. Ask Demetria if you can have a turn when she finishes." Clarence relinquishes the bicycle and walks over to the swing set. He pushes Pat's swing into the pole and walks away leaving Pat in tears. "Clarence, you come over to me this minute", the teacher insists. "I want you to sit down right here beside me."

Clarence is typical of the bully type child in the following ways:

1. Disliked by the other children in the class.
2. Spends all his time attempting to get attention.
3. Prefers negative attention from a teacher to no attention at all.

Ways of Helping the Aggressive Child: The usual rule of thumb for working with this type of child is to ignore her when she misbehaves and reward her when she's good. If her misbehavior is really out of line, put her in a "time-out" situation (make her sit on a chair) for a limited period of time.

This system, which is called "behavior modification" does not always work well with the preschool bully. Here are some problems:

1. A bully may not have social skills to gain the acceptance of other children.
2. The bully may prefer getting a negative response from other children to getting no response at all.
3. In a busy classroom, the teacher may find it difficult to carry out the behavior modification plan consistently.

Alternative Ways of Working with the Aggressive Child: The aggressive child needs to learn positive ways of getting along with other children. Preschool children are attracted to children who are doing something interesting. Help the aggressive child become involved in a fun activity, washing the wagon on the playground or rolling toy cars down the slide. Other children will want to come join her.

Make the rules clear to the aggressive child and insist that these rules are followed. Enforce the rules when the child does a small thing wrong. Don't wait for a major problem.

Use stories, puppets and imaginative play to help children understand their own behavior. Play out a scene in which a child wants to make friends, but keeps hitting other children. Let the children in the class help the child find ways to make friends. Ask your child to contribute ideas.

Help your aggressive child develop an area of expertise. The better she feels about herself, the less need she will have to be a bully.

The Cry-Baby

The aggressive child is usually thought of as the prime trouble maker in the classroom. Interestingly enough, the aggressive child has an accomplice. When there is a child in the class who cries easily, the aggressive child will tend to seek him out and make him the victim. It is especially rewarding for the aggressive child to select a victim who does a lot of crying.

The cry-baby type child puts the teacher in a bind. On the one hand, the teacher does not want to let the bully get away with anything. On the other hand, the teacher wants to help the cry-baby learn to ignore minor incidents.

Ways of Helping the Cry-Baby:

1. Make sure that this child is in good health. Children can be irritable because they do not feel well.
2. Remember that the cry-baby and the bully are much alike. They are both playing for attention from the adult world.
3. Be consistent in not responding to crying. When the child comes to you in tears, say in a very firm voice, "I do not understand crying. Talk to me with words."
4. Help the cry-baby learn ways of making friends. Very often this child has not learned to take part in the back and forth teasing that is characteristic of preschool social exchange.
5. Use puppets, stories or imaginative play to help the child recognize his own behavior patterns.

6. Talk with the child's parents. If you find that the parents are too solicitous or too protective, help them realize the importance of developing coping skills.

The Child Who Is Shy and Withdrawn

Most teachers are quite careful about not being over-solicitous with the cry-baby child. They realize that if you fuss over crying the crying behavior will increase. It is not as easy to recognize when we encourage shy or withdrawn behavior. The mother who says, "You know my son is a little shy. You will have to forgive him", is making an excuse for her son that can be harmful in the long run. The more we beg or cajole shy or withdrawn children to participate, the more we discourage them from accepting the responsibility of learning to communicate and participate.

1. Seek out opportunities for shy or withdrawn children to participate in a group activity. At first, provide roles for them that do not require verbal communication (passing out the cookies, putting on the record player or collecting the scraps after an art activity).

2. Talk to the children's parents. Make sure that home and school are being consistent.

3. Find out something the children are good at or especially enjoy. Ask them to share these with the class.

4. Recognize that there are differences in temperament. The shy child may be perfectly happy an d well adjusted. Quite often the shy child is sought after by other children in the classroom.

Specific Problems

Biting: Biting is not uncommon between one and a half and three. There is an old wives' tale that says that the best way to handle biting is to bite back. It is about the worst thing you can do because you are showing the child that it is all right to bite.

The best way to handle biting behavior is to prevent it. You can probably tell when your biter is about to find a victim. Pull him away, sit him down firmly and say in a serious voice, "No biting. We do not bite."

If the child does bite, despite your efforts at prevention, use overcorrection. Make him bite for several minutes into a piece of hard rubber. Say in a firm voice, "We bite rubber. We do not bite other children."

Taking Toys Home: Many schools report problems with children taking toys home in their pockets. Teachers often are reluctant to ask children to empty their pockets for fear of accusing a child unjustly. If small toys are missing from your class, talk to the children about it at the end of the day.

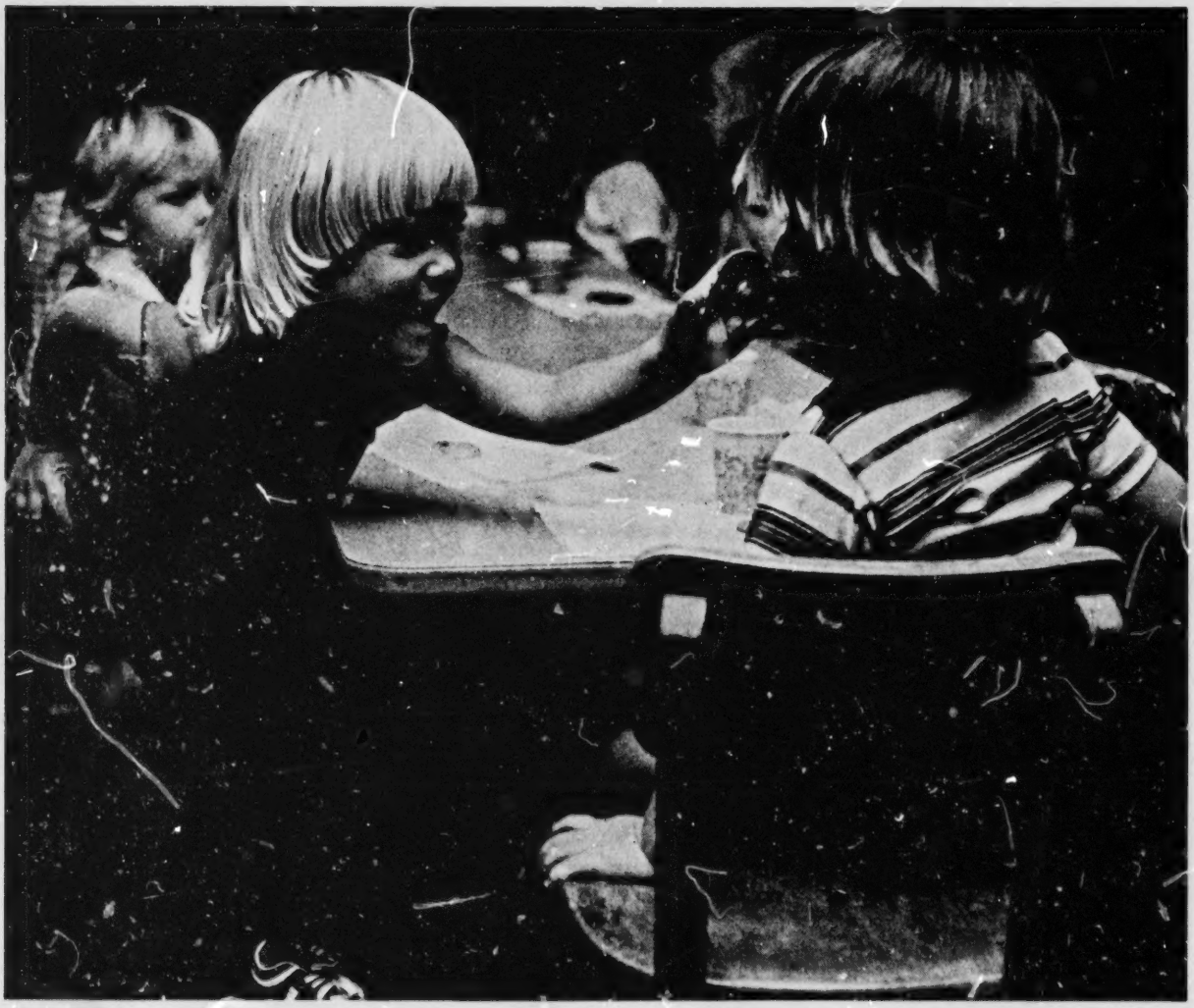
We want to make sure that all the toys are back on the shelf. Are we sure that no toys are hiding in a pocket. Let me see. Tracy has pockets. Can you show me how empty your pockets are? Good. Camille, let me see your pockets. Oh, here, there is a little car in your pocket. Put the car back here on the shelf. Good. All our toys are back in the right place.

"Bad" Words: Children at around the age of four go through a stage where they use bathroom words as a special in-joke. Pooh-pooh, Pee, B.M., Doo-Doo and similar words are considered to be especially funny. Actually, it is a natural and harmless stage. The less attention we give it, the faster it goes away.

Occasionally children will pick up words that are blasphemous or particularly offensive. When this happens the adult shoud say, "Please don't use that word. it is not good manners." The four year old is usually quite willing to accept the fact that there are some rules that limit his speech.

Summary

Maintaining a healthy classroom climate is not an accidental achievement. It requires careful planning and organization. It involves the foresight to avoid conflict and confusion and the hindsight to analyze a "disturbance" so that it will not happen again. Most importantly, it involves knowing and caring about every child in the class. By thinking through a day before it happens and by thinking out the needs of every child, a classroom teacher creates a climate that optimizes growth and development.



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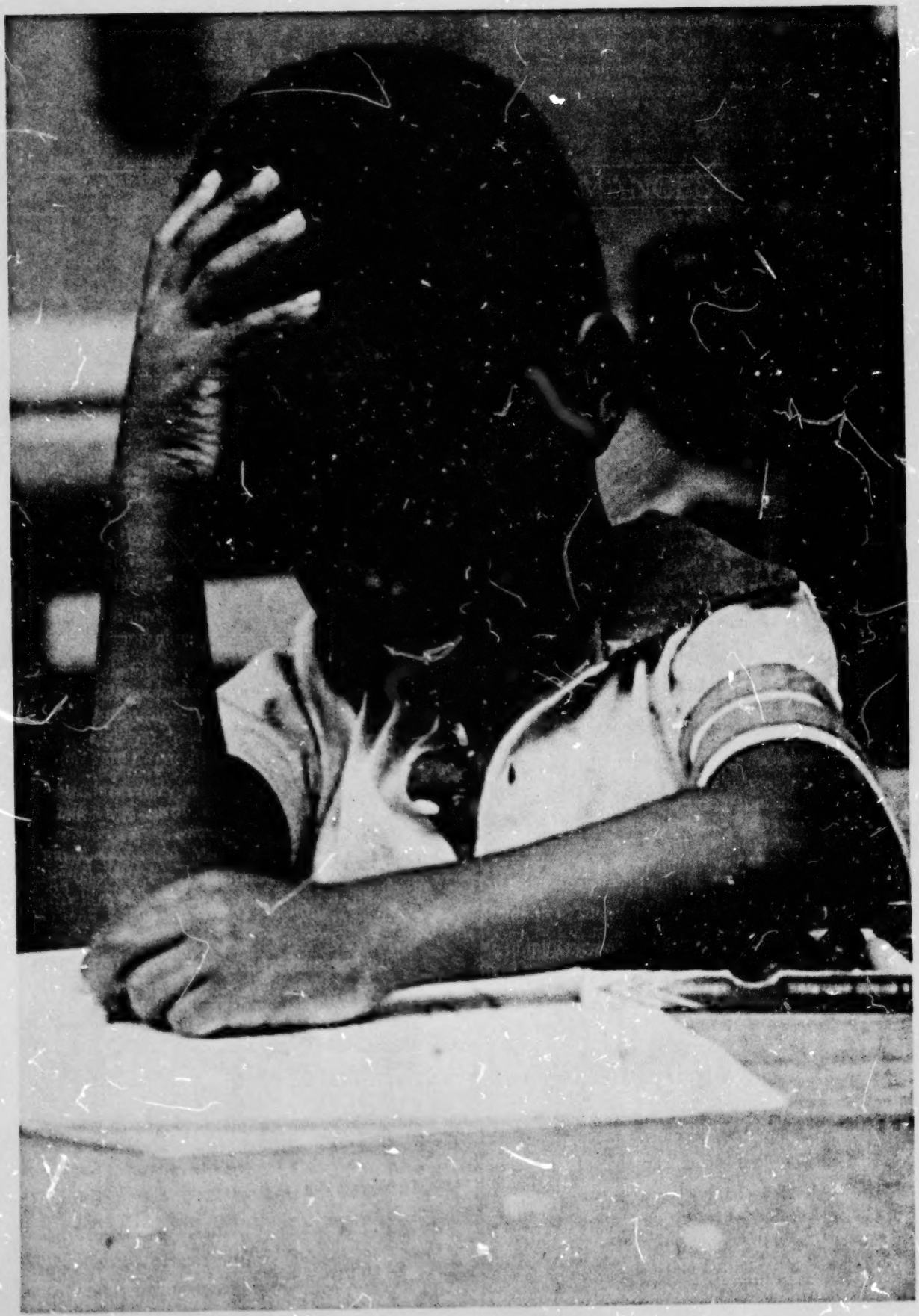


ACT V

THE PERFORMERS

A Short Story

Mrs. Weaver was new at the job of career counseling. Her first applicant was a young woman who was very much in limbo about the kind of job she wanted.

Mrs. Weaver: I am glad that you have come to our agency. Before describing job openings to you, I would like to have you talk about the kinds of things you are good at and the kinds of things you enjoy.

Applicant: I haven't had too much experience. So far I had a job in a grocery store for a while, but I quit cause of all the hours standing on my feet. Then I started out as training to be a nurse's aide, but I didn't like all the pressure and tension. The one job I really enjoyed was working in a baby shop on Saturday afternoon. These mothers came in with the cutest little babies. You know I really love kids. I wouldn't mind working in some wort of day care set up.

Mrs. Weaver: It sounds as if you have found a good starting point. Maybe you would like to enroll in our child care training course. I will be happy to help you with the paper work.

Although Mrs. Weaver was delighted with her applicant's interest in children, her advice may not have been sound. It takes a lot more than enjoying children to be an effective early childhood teacher. A person who tires easily, who has problems with pressure and tension and who likes to move from job to job may not be a good candidate.

Early childhood caregivers or teachers must be emotionally stable and mature, capable of remaining calm in stress situations. Furthermore they must be jacks-of-all-trades—caregivers, psychologists, general managers, entertainers, nurses and educators.

In this section we focus on some of the special knowledge and skills a child care worker must achieve in order to be effective in her role:

- Social and Emotional Characteristics of Young Children
- Helping Children Feel Good About Themselves
- Helping Children Develop Responsibility
- Managing the Classroom

SCENE I

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Mrs. Caruso and Mr. Valentine, members of a civic club, were visiting the community sponsored day care center. Mrs. Caruso was impressed as soon as she entered the facility. The place had a clean smell and a tidy look. The cribs were lined up in neat rows and every baby had its own crib. "Isn't it amazing," Mrs. Caruso remarked, "not one baby is crying and the place is so nice and clean."

Mr. Valentine had a different impression. It seemed to him that the place was not just clean, it was sterile. And wasn't it strange to see that many babies in cribs just staring quietly into space? "You know," Mr. Caruso commented out loud, "I have the feeling that these babies are being neglected. They should have toys to play with and they shouldn't be just left in their cribs."

Mrs. Caruso was not convinced. "They are only babies," she insisted. "You don't want them to be overstimulated." Mrs. Caruso and Mr. Valentine argued for a while but they did come to some agreement. They agreed that, from a physical point of view, the center was a safe and healthy environment. They also agreed that the babies, who were mostly between 4 and 8 months old, needed more than good physical care. The atmosphere in the center was just right for newborns, but it provided no stimulation for older babies.

The Infant—Birth to One

From birth to one month old babies respond more to what is happening inside them than to what is happening outside. If they are kept clean, dry and well fed, placed in a comfortable crib and are soothed when something disturbs them, they do not require outside stimulation. During the next two months there is a gradual turning outward—an awakening to the world outside. The baby who is held, rocked, sung to, smiled at, loved, begins to make some primitive connections between the sound of mother's voice and the smile on mother's face or the sensation of being rocked. Babies who are played with, cuddled and soothed are learning to associate the presence of a caregiver with a sense of well-being. Children who do not receive this kind of mothering continue to tune out the outside world.

From three to six months old babies are learning to explore the world with their hands as well as their eyes. Learning to reach out is dependent on having something to reach for. If the baby has an interesting gym strung across her crib she will bat at it, watch it jingle in response to the bat and bat at it again. This tendency to repeat an action that created an interesting effect shows the infant's first intuitive recognition of her own ability to affect her environment.

At about the same time the baby is making discoveries about her emerging ability to make things happen, she is also discovering things about her social world. She has learned to smile and coo at a caregiver and to expect a cooing response. The baby has learned to play and enjoy a sound game with a responsive adult. A baby who is deprived of opportunities to play the smiling, cooing response games lies lethargically in the crib and development is delayed.

Between six and twelve months old the baby is learning to move through space—crawling, creeping or scooting around the house. As the baby practices these new motor skills, she is discovering new things with her hands, her eyes and her ears. She becomes more adept at interpreting sounds. The phone rings and she looks toward her mother, as if expecting her to answer it. She also becomes more adept at noticing detail. She will discover a small thread on the rug and attempt to pick it up. She will pay close attention to the face of a stranger or stare very hard at her mother if she puts on a new hat or changes the style of her hair.

The baby's new ability to move through space carries the potential danger of moving away from mother. Fortunately the baby recognizes mother's face, even from a distance, and is able to keep a close watch on mother's whereabouts. For the baby, between nine and twelve months, mother becomes the base of operations. The baby will explore freely as long as mother is in sight.

The Toddler from One to Two

By the time the baby is one year old she is able to exhibit a whole range of emotions, surprise, pleasure, delight, sadness, wariness, fear and anger. She is becoming more interested in new people, although she will still react negatively to being picked up by a stranger. It is an age when the baby appears to be saying, "Don't come to me. I'll come to you."

The toddler spends most of her time on the move, walking, running, squatting, climbing, pushing and carrying. She is a great explorer and experimenter, searching continuously for something with a moving part or something that fits into something or something that can be poured, spilled, carried or somehow transported around. Although the baby is continually moving away from mother, the presence of mother is still critical for providing a safe base for exploration.

In a nursery school we find toddlers who show extreme distress when the parent leaves. Although we like to interpret this as a strong attachment bond, it is probably truer to describe this as an insecure attachment bond. The toddler who does not feel trustful about a parent returning has more difficulty letting go.

By the second half of the second year we see another change in social-emotional behavior which we might call self-awareness. The toddler seems to have a real sense of her own identity, of being a person apart from and different from other people. If you put a ribbon in her hair and stand her in front of a mirror she will notice the ribbon in the mirror immediately and touch her head. It is as if the baby is saying that she recognized the image in the mirror as a reflection of a body that belongs to her. An-

other indication of the baby's newly gained self-awareness is her use of the word "mine" to signify her own possessions. Finally, and most persuasively, the toddler demonstrates a special delight in assuming the role of a performer. If she dances to music and adults applaud the performance, she dances with increased vigor. Recognizing herself as the performer for an appreciative audience is a strong indication of awareness of self as an individual.

The explorations of the toddler inevitably increase the potential of hurting oneself or damaging property. The toddler is continuously learning what kinds of explorations are permitted and what explorations are prohibited. "No, don't touch," or "Hot, don't touch," are familiar words to a busy and inquisitive toddler. Often we will catch a toddler who is about to touch a forbidden object saying "no, no" to herself.

In a home situation parents have the option of putting breakable things away or leaving them within a child's reach and teaching her to touch them gently. In a child care situation this option is not available. Anything that is breakable is also dangerous and must be taken away from the environment. Child-proofing an environment for a toddler means not only putting away breakable, consumable or sharp things that can be swallowed, it also means plugging up outlets, eliminating lamp cords, bolting outside doors and protecting dressers that can topple over if the child stands on a drawer.

The toddler's ability to respond to a "no" is an important development in the second year. It demonstrates the ability to inhibit an action that has been set in motion before it has been completed. But although we like to see children exhibit this control, we do not want to see a young child inhibited. If the child hears "no" too often or too sharply, he will over-generalize the prohibition and stop exploring with his hands. The child who is not free to explore with his hands is also not free to learn.

The Child from Two to Three

The period from 2 to 3 is known as "The Terrible Twos" The "no" of the toddler has become a convincing temper tantrum and the two year old is described as ornery, stubborn and impossible to live with. The two year old child, for the most part, has earned her reputation. It is a period in which the child has discovered her ability to make decisions for herself and to exert authority. The "no's" of the two year old are not simply a way of saying "I don't want it" or "I won't do it." The "no's" are a way of declaring her right to make decisions. The two year old wants to do it by herself even when doing it by herself may not be in her best interest.

For the most part the tantrums of the two year old disappear as long as they are ignored. After all, it is not really worth having a tantrum if no one is going to pay attention. A few children at this age, however, have tantrums as a reaction to being tired and leaving them alone doesn't change the behavior. For these children it is usually a good idea to take them out of the situation, hold them quietly but firmly and invite them back to play when the screaming stops.

Three Year Olds

By three or three and a half the turbulence of the two's has passed and a quieter child emerges. The three year old is able to focus on a task for several minutes and to interact in a positive way with other children. By three years old the child has expanded her repertoire of emotional responses. She can be sad or pensive. She can be jealous, wary or frightened. She can be contented, jolly or exuberant. She is also more tuned in to the feelings of others. Pleasing adults is becoming increasingly more important to her and praise or affection is becoming a powerful reinforcer. Although the three year old is less apt to throw temper tantrums than the two year old, her behavior can disintegrate when she is tired or hungry.

Four Year Olds

The four year old child is becoming increasingly aware of herself as a member of the peer group. Much of her day is spent establishing and maintaining her position with her peers. The four year old uses her growing facility with words to praise or to put down other children, to call attention to her own accomplishments and to convince the group to adopt her ideas. The four year old is interested in

playing with other children and will use threats and promises to win a friend or gain entry into a group. "I'll be your best friend," or "I won't be your friend," are frequent refrains in a preschool.

Separation of the sexes is a common phenomenon among four year olds. On the whole, boys tend to gather in larger groups than girls and their play is noisier and more active. Out on the playground they require plenty of space to move around. They enjoy all varieties of play and are particularly fond of monster or superhero play.

Girls are more likely to gather in groups of two or three. When a third or fourth child moves in on the play, we may see an active effort made to exclude the intruder. Four year old girls, on the whole, do less running around than four year old boys and spend more of their time involved in conversation.

Although four year olds of both sexes are learning to take turns and share their toys, arguments over possession take place continually. Frequently, disputes that begin verbally end with a push, a punch or a skirmish. For the most part, children do not really hurt each other in these skirmishes, but adult supervision is an important safeguard.

SCENE II

HELPING CHILDREN FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES

A Short Story

Brian started off the morning in high spirits. He was wearing his beautiful new superman jersey that grandma had sent for his birthday. Everything went fine until juice time when, somehow or other, grape juice slipped out of his hand and got all over his jersey. "Brian," his teacher reprimanded, "you've got to be more careful with your juice. It's the second day in a row that you have made a mess."

From that time on things went from bad to worse. At art time Brian finished his picture in a hurry so he could go over to the sink and wash the grape juice off superman's face. "Come back to your seat," his teacher suggested. "I want us all to share our pretty pictures. Oh, look how beautiful Terry's picture looks. Would you like to tell me about it? Oh, Demetria, look at what you've done. You made such a happy picture. I'd like to hear you talk about it." When she came to Brian's picture, she didn't say anything at all.

Now it was circle time and all the children were asked to put away their crayons and their papers and come to the circle. Brian started to put his crayons away, but then he looked at his picture. It really didn't look very pretty, he decided. Maybe he could add a few more strokes. Maybe some black lines going up and down would be a good idea. As Brian was fixing up his drawing, he heard his teacher saying, loud and clear, "What good children I have in my class. I like the way most of you put your crayons away quickly."

Brian tried to hurry with his picture, but when he went fast with the black crayon, his paper started to tear. He crumpled it up, threw it on the floor, and walked over to the circle. "He threw his paper on the floor," Tommy tattled. "He's bad." "Yes, he's bad," agreed Ben. "He's got juice all over his shirt. His mommy is going to be mad."

The teacher paid no attention to these comments. "Come on now, let's sing in a pretty voice. 'If you're happy and you know it....'." At the end of the song it was dismissal time. All the children asked the teacher to stamp happy faces on their hand. "I'm good," Jerry asserted, as he stood in line for his happy face. Brian's mother came to the door and Brian dashed over to her. "Don't you want to get your happy face before we go?", Brian's mother asked. Brian burst into tears.

All of us, like Brian, have had days when one thing leads to another. We may feel grumpy or out of sorts but we don't think of ourselves as bad people because we've had a bad day. With young children it may be quite a different story. During the preschool years children have their own unique way of looking at the world. Because they don't have the notion of "chance" they think that bad things happen for a reason. An accident, in their view, happens to them because they did something or thought something wrong. When a series of bad things happens to children they begin to think of themselves as being bad people. Brian's bad day was initiated by a minor, accidental spill. This started off a chain of behavior. By the end of the morning Brian was convinced he was a bad boy, unworthy of a smiling face.

During the preschool years children are continually making judgments about themselves. The sum of these judgments constitutes the self-concept, which is, in essence, the child's value judgment of himself. The preschool teacher can help children develop a healthy self-concept in a variety of ways.

- By Helping Them Develop a Sense of Personal Identity and Worthiness
- By Helping Them to Recognize and Express Their Own Feelings
- By Helping Them Learn to Appreciate and Value Their Ethnic/Cultural Tradition

Helping Children Develop a Sense of Personal Identity and Self-Worth

All of us get upset when we meet someone we know and whose names we can't remember. We are concerned that they will interpret our lapse of memory as a sign that we don't think of them as being important. For young children, their own name is especially significant. They expect everyone to know their name and they will learn to recognize their name in writing before they can read anything else.

The more opportunities that we can find to call each child in our class by name, the more we strengthen his sense of personal identity.

But even though we recognize how important it is to call the children by their correct names, we may have problems in the beginning remembering all of the names of the children. Here are some suggestions:

- Become familiar with the class roster in advance. That way all you will need to do is attach faces to the names on the first day of school.
- Ask the parents to send in photos of their children in advance or use a Polaroid camera to take the children's pictures
- Pin name cards on the back of each child.
- Sing songs in which the names of the children are repeated over and over again.

Learning the names of all the children in the class is a good head start in helping children develop a sense of personal identity. Another way of helping children learn more about themselves is the development of the ME BOOK.

A child can use a ME BOOK to record information about himself.

ME BOOK
Table of Contents

1. This is my photo.
2. This is my handprint.
3. This is my family.
4. My favorite food.
5. My favorite color.
6. My favorite animal.
7. My best drawing of me.

A child's ME BOOK is both a means of increasing her sense of personal identity and a record of the way she feels about herself.

Helping Children Learn to Recognize and Express Feelings

Often children fail to distinguish between having bad feelings and actually being bad. The concept of feelings is not easy to grasp. Only when children have developed a firm idea of their own identity are we ready to understand what is meant by feelings. Younger children cry when they are sad, strike out when they are angry and laugh when they are happy. As they grow older they can use words that go along with these feelings, but it does take time. Once children have learned to express feelings in words they are less likely to act out their feelings in ways that are inappropriate. Most important, they recognize that it is good to express our feelings as long as we respect the feelings of other people.

Some ways to help children express feelings:

- Make a FEEL WHEEL out of a paper plate. Put a pointer that can spin in the center and draw happy, sad and sleepy faces around the perimeter. Give the children an opportunity to point to the way they are feeling.
- Sing songs about feelings. One of the most appropriate songs is "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands."
- Read stories that describe situations in which a child faces anger, sadness or jealousy. Talk about the feelings that are aroused in the child.
- Play happy and sad records. Let the children crayon along with the music. Talk about the difference in the pictures.

Helping Children Appreciate Their Ethnic/Cultural Heritage

A Short Story

James had just moved from a small southern town to a city in Connecticut. It was his first week in nursery school. James was happy to be with other children his own age and was excited about all the new toys and games in his classroom. At circle time he was the first one to volunteer to tell a story. "I aksed my mommy where we were," he began. "Jimmy," the teacher stopped him, "You say 'asked', not 'aksed.'" "Aksed, not aksed," Jimmy repeated. He went on with his story. "You don't say 'We ain't got', " the teacher explained firmly. "You say, 'We don't have'." James stopped talking. The next day when it was time to go to school his tummy was hurting.

It is easy to understand why James had a tummy ache. Like all preschool children, he wasn't aware of grammar or articulation and he did not know why the teacher was correcting him when he was telling the truth. The one thing that he did sense was that the teacher didn't like the way he talked. Was their something bad about his talking? Was there something bad about him?

Most preschool teachers recognize that it is inappropriate to correct a child's grammar under any circumstances. It is especially harmful to correct a child with a dialect. From the child's point of view, this may be a direct criticism of him and an indirect slur on his family. The best way to destroy a child's self-concept is to make him feel that he comes from a family that doesn't measure up.

A child whose ethnic, religious or language background is different from the other children is always vulnerable. Even if the teacher is warm and accepting, the other children, through their words and actions, can make a child feel different. A sensitive teacher will make a special effort to make the child with a different background feel wanted and valued. She will learn all she can about the child's heritage and discover ways of helping the child feel proud of who he is.

Here are some ways of helping children appreciate their own ethnic/cultural heritage and the heritage of the other children in the classroom:

- Invite parents from different backgrounds to prepare "ethnic" snacks for the class.
- Introduce children to music from different countries and different traditions.
- Have a "grandmother" dress up day in which children wear clothes that represent the country their family came from.
- Have a multi-cultural pot-luck dinner where children are introduced to different foods.
- With the help of your parents, celebrate each of the holidays of the ethnic groups represented in your classroom.

Finally, examine your own feelings very carefully. How do you feel about children who are different? Do you have any built-in barriers or stereotypes that interfere with your ability to relate in a positive way to any of the children in your class?

SCENE III

HELPING CHILDREN DEVELOP RESPONSIBILITY

A Short Story

When the director arrived at the child care center one hour after dismissal time she was met by a sorry scene. In front of the school stood an irate parent, lips shut tight and arms clenched in a defiant position. Out on the playground beside the building were four teachers and one youngster all on hands and knees methodically searching through the bushes. Occasionally comments could be overheard:

"If Vanessa were a little better organized she would be able to find her own things and we wouldn't go through this madness every other day."

"The problem with Vanessa is simple. She likes to take her shoes off and doesn't know how to get them back on."

"The problem with Vanessa is she's just plain spoiled. Everybody is always doing things for her, especially her own mother."

"Oh, it's not only Vanessa who's always losing things. We don't have a place for kids to keep their own things in the classroom. So of course we are always hunting."

At this point the director called a halt to the search and invited Vanessa's mother into her office.

"I understand that you are upset about Vanessa coming home with one shoe and I can understand your feelings. I can say, however, with some degree of confidence, that Vanessa's shoe will show up. At the same time Vanessa's lost shoe gives us all something to work for. We would like to help Vanessa take care of her own things and be responsible for not letting things get lost. We'd like to have our school environment planned and orderly so that it is easy for all children to keep track of their own possessions."

In this scene we look at ways in which a teacher can help the children develop a sense of responsibility.

A sense of responsibility develops as children:

1. Learn to do more and more things for themselves.
2. Learn to face new and difficult challenges, even at the risk of failure.
3. Learn to take responsibility for their own possessions and for their immediate environment.

Responsibility for Themselves

Achieving Self-Help Skills

In the infancy period the major struggles that parents have with their babies revolve around sleeping, eating and crying. As soon as the baby learns to walk parents become a little less concerned with sleeping, eating and crying and a lot more concerned with danger. Will the baby pull down a lamp on his head, get his fingers caught in the door, tip over the dresser or run out into the street? By two years old the major source of worry changes again. Will the baby grow up to be responsible, flexible, considerate, toilet trained, a pleasure to take out to dinner or into a shopping center?

As parents shift their concern from keeping children healthy and safe to teaching a child a sense of responsibility for taking care of herself and being good to others, a common thing happens. The child learns to resist the parents wishes with a decisive "NO", which may or may not be accompanied by a temper tantrum.

Parents quite often describe their two year old as "downright stubborn or pigheaded." Psychologists insist that the two year old is experiencing an

"autonomy crisis". He wants to do things his own way and by himself, even when it's not in his best interest. The child needs help and rejects help, insists on doing something by himself and minutes later insists on someone doing it for him. When you want to help him put on his shoe because you're in a hurry he insists on doing it himself. When you want him to pull off his sock he insists on getting your help.

By three years old, the autonomy crisis may be less acute, but there is an ongoing struggle between dependence and independence that continues through the preschool years. Children sometimes want to be independent and at other times want to remain dependent. Parents endorse their children's desire to be independent, but at the same time want their children to accept help when it is needed. The dependence/independence conflict takes many years to resolve.

One of the ways that children can develop appropriate independence is to learn self-help skills. Dressing, eating without assistance, grooming, using the bathroom, preparing one's own food are considered self-help skills. Let us look at three of the self-help skills that are often of special concern in a child care setting. These are eating without assistance, toileting and dressing.

Eating: Often we think of children as having completed their eating skills when they have learned to drink from a glass or eat with a spoon without spilling. Actually, learning to use a utensil is just the beginning. The preschool child is expected to learn a host of customs and rules that have to do with eating. Often we scold a child for having poor manners without realizing all there is to learn and remember. Let us look at some of the eating rules that children have to learn.

•Unfold napkin and put it on your lap before beginning to eat.

•Wait until everyone is served before beginning to eat.

•Use the right kind of utensil for the food you are eating. Some food is eaten with fingers, some with a spoon and some with a fork.

•Use the appropriate utensil or methods to put food on other food. Some foods are sprinkled on, some are poured on and some are spread on with a knife.

•Some foods are all right to lick and some food cannot be licked.

•Some foods can be eaten directly and some foods can be eaten only if they are put on other foods (butter, sugar, jam, ketchup, gravy, salt, pepper).

•Some foods are cut with the side of the fork and some foods are cut with a knife.

•The mouth has to be wiped with a napkin whenever it gets dirty.

•Napkins have to be placed on the table after eating, but not during eating.

•If you want food that is across the table, you say, "Please pass..."

•Once something is in your mouth you have to swallow it, even if you don't like it.

•Chewing has to be done quietly and with the mouth closed.

•It is not appropriate to draw a picture in your mashed potatoes or play with your food in any way.

•The glass has to be returned after drinking to the right side of the plate, not on the edge of the table or on top of the plate.

•It is all right to talk at the table, but not until you've finished a bite.

•You have to sit at the table, even if you have finished, until everyone else has finished.

Obviously, there are too many rules to expect a child to learn at one time and much too many to remember. The best way to teach children good table manners is not to teach them at all. Instead:

1. Make sure that meals are a happy time.
2. Model good table manners
3. Explain reasons for certain prohibitions. "Eating a spoonful of sugar is bad for your teeth."
4. Praise children for the rules they remember.

Toileting: In many child care centers the criterion for entry is being toilet trained. Although this is

understandable from the point of view of a director, it may not always be in the best interests of either the school or the child. Parents who know that their children must be toilet trained in order to enter school, may become so tense about the process that their efforts are counter-productive. The unfortunate thing is that, in most cases, the easiest way to train a child is to take him to school. Many children are trained almost instantly when they watch other children use the toilet.

Although a child who has not learned to use the toilet may learn easily at school, it is also common for children who have good control at home to have accidents at school. A critical rule for all child care centers is to make sure that each child has a full set of name-tagged clothing in his cubby. When a child does have an accident, he should be changed in a matter-of-fact way. No child, under any circumstances, should ever be shamed about an accident.

One of the questions that often comes up about toileting in nursery school is whether or not there should be a special time when all children go to the bathroom or whether children should simply have access to the bathroom whenever they need it.

In some situations, where the bathroom is not adjacent to the classroom, the teacher must take the children into the bathroom as a group. In other situations, where the bathroom is easily accessible, the teacher has a choice. Although it seems to be more reasonable and certainly more natural to let children go "on demand", there are several advantages to having bathroom times scheduled:

1. The teacher can enforce sanitary rules such as using toilet paper, flushing the toilet and washing hands after toileting.
2. The teacher can help children with hard to remove clothing.
3. The teacher can help children learn how to wash and dry hands correctly.
4. Other routines such as lunch time or naptime are less apt to be interrupted if a set bathroom time has been scheduled.
5. Children who are very busy playing or working may forget to use the bathroom.

In most cases teachers can schedule bathroom times, but still encourage children to use the bathroom when they need to.

Dressing: Learning to dress and undress is a skill that children can and should learn in the preschool years. Most children enjoy the sense of mastery they feel when they succeed in pulling on an article of clothing.

When children do not want to dress themselves we need to ask why:

- Do they lack the skills to dress themselves?
- Are their clothes too difficult to put on?
- Have they been given enough time to dress themselves at home?
- Do their parents tend to dress them rather than wait for them to dress themselves?
- Have parents or teachers been unrealistic in the demands they make on children?

Age Chart on Self-Help Skills

Age	Dressing	Eating	Toileting
2-3	Takes off clothing	Can use spoon & fork but often resorts to fingers.	Child asks to use toilet during the day—frequent accidents. May still wet at night.
3-4	Dresses with assistance. Learns to button.	Uses spoon and fork with dexterity.	Child is dry at night. Occasional accidents day and night. Requires some assistance.
4-5	Dresses independently, needs help tying.	Uses spoon and fork to eat—cuts some food with fork.	Dry day and night. Accidents are rare. Uses toilet independently. Washes hands after using toilet.
5-6	Shoes, pulling on boots, or pulling on tight clothes	Spreads butter, learning to cut soft meat.	Very few accidents.

A Situation

Mrs. Stapleton was irate. Timmy had come home with wet pants in a bag for the second day in a row.

"I don't know what goes on in that school," she shouted over the telephone, "but you certainly don't take care of kids. My Timmy has been trained for a full year now and here he comes home with wet pants. This is absolutely humiliating. Don't you believe in taking children to the bathroom?"

Timmy's classroom teacher could have responded to this parent in many different ways. Let's examine a few of them:

Response 1: "Timmy probably has a cold in his bladder. Instead of getting all upset, take him to the doctor."

Response 2: "Well, I can't be expected to keep track of how many times sixteen children go to the bathroom."

Response 3: "Maybe if you'd dress him in more sensible clothes it wouldn't be such a pain for Timmy to go the bathroom."

Response 4: "Don't get so upset about it. All kids have an occasional accident."

Response 5: "I realize you are upset about this. It is not unusual for children to have occasional accidents, but I will watch him more carefully tomorrow."

Response 6: "Accidents are a reaction to pressure. Perhaps you and I could stop pressuring him and he won't have so many accidents."

Which answer do you feel is more appropriate? Why?

Responsibility Toward Others

Learning to Try New Tasks Even at the Risk of Failure

A Short Story

Mrs. Morrel was sorting out puzzles to put in her classroom. "I must put these 12 piece puzzles away," she mumbled to herself. "All of the children in the class would want to try them, but most of them could never get the puzzles back together. No use frustrating kids if you don't have to."

Mrs. Morrel is right to sort out toys before placing them in the classroom. She is also right about not wanting to frustrate children unnecessarily. Her problem is that she is failing to draw the line between a challenge and a frustration. Children build on their own successful experiences by repeating over and over a task they have just mastered. But successful experiences alone are not sufficient to help a child learn new skills. The best formula for learning new skills is to try and fail, try again and approach success. There is no experience quite as reinforcing as a success after repeated tries.

Some children seem to enjoy a challenge almost instinctively. They will take the toughest puzzle off the shelf or go up the highest slide on the playground. Other children won't attempt anything unless they are positive of success. It is important for all children to have experience with both success and failure, regardless of their basic inclination. Here are some ways the teacher can make this happen in the classroom.

1. Praise children for trying a hard task, even if they do not succeed.
2. Discourage other children from making fun of a child who fails at a task.
3. When a child fails at a task that he attempts, find a way to make the task a little easier.
4. When a child is successful with a task, find a way to make it a little harder.

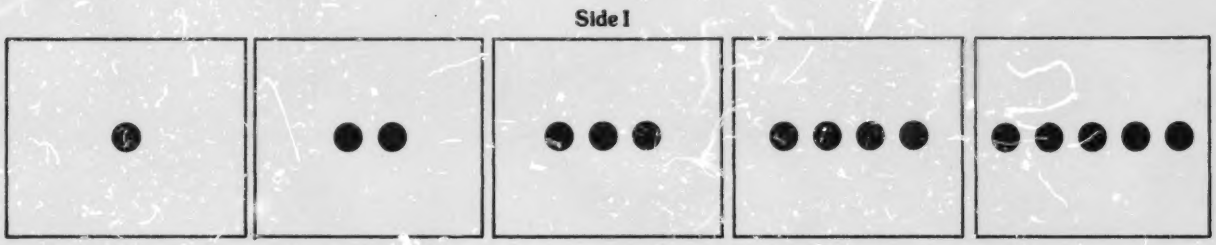
5. Avoid correcting children's mistakes. Instead, structure materials so that they are self-corrective. Children and adults learn most when they discover their own mistakes.

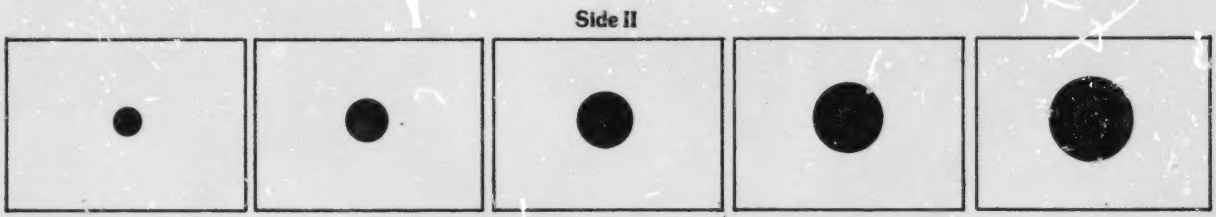
Self-Corrective Game

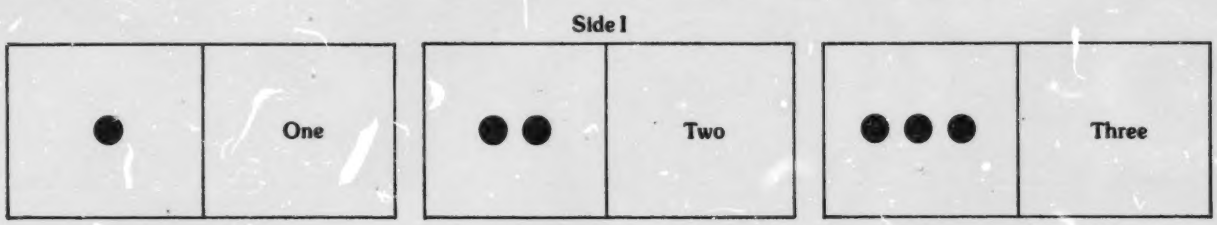
A game is "self-corrective" when there is an obvious way for a child to know when he has completed the game successfully.

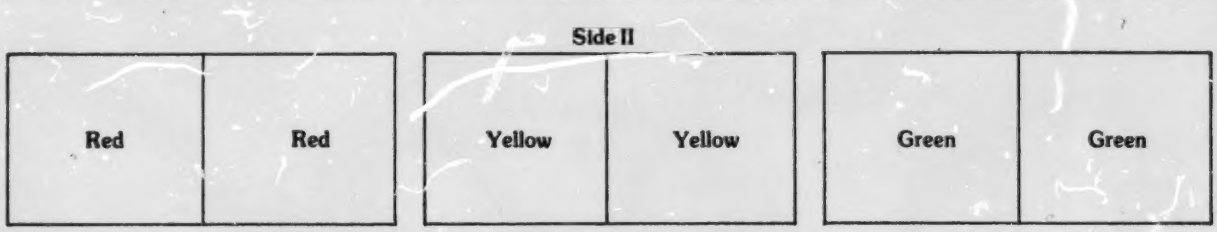
"Self-corrective" materials that are standard equipment in most child care settings are puzzles, stacking toys, shape sorters, graduated cylinders and table blocks. Teacher-constructed materials can be made self-corrective with a little ingenuity.

Here is an example of "card games" made by a teacher. The self-correction is on the other side of the card. The child flips the cards over to find out if she is right.









Responsibility Toward Their Environment

Taking Responsibility for Your Own Possessions and Helping to Maintain the Classroom Equipment

A Short Story

Mrs. Jones was delighted with being selected for the position of classroom aide. She was bound and determined to do a good job, to take initiative and to help the classroom teacher in every possible way. True to her resolve, she stayed busy from the moment school began. As the children came into the classroom she took off their sweaters and put them into the appropriate cubbies. She helped the children with breakfast by pouring their milk, wiping their spills and throwing their paper goods into the trash. At choice time she managed to help almost every child in the class. She got out the materials, hunted for missing puzzle pieces, helped children with their drawings and cleaned up the materials that were left on the floor. When Tommy drew on the shelf with magic marker, she immediately got the brillo pad and got it completely clean. When the children went home after school, she put on all the sweaters and made sure that everyone went home with all their possessions in hand.

When the teacher invited Mrs. Jones in for a "little talk", Mrs. Jones was a bit surprised by the conversation. How do you suppose it went?

Obviously, Mrs. Jones was doing too much for the children. Despite her noble intentions, she was robbing the children of an opportunity to take care of their own possessions and to share in the care of the classroom. Learning to keep track of one's own things, learning to feel responsible for materials, for not being wasteful and for putting things away after use is a tall order. Here are some ways a classroom teacher can help children develop this kind of responsibility.

1. Set up the classroom so that it is well organized, attractive and inviting.

2. Provide individual cubbies for each child. (If you don't have money to buy cubbies, you can make them out of boxes.) Make sure that each cubby is labelled. You can use names, pictures or symbols that the children will recognize.

3. Color code your shelves and your materials so that your children know where everything belongs.

4. Take away materials that the children are not using. An overstuffed classroom is hard to maintain.

5. Incorporate clean-up time into your regular schedule. Use a special song, signal, or record to let children know when it is clean-up time.

6. Use a puppet or classroom mascot to help you with "inspection" after clean-up time. If the mascot is unhappy about a messy shelf children volunteer very quickly to clean up.

7. When a great mess is being made by a few children remember which children are involved. They may need a little encouragement in putting things in place.

8. Do not let children waste or destroy. Explain your reasons, but be firm. All children need, and most children welcome, limits that are made clear and enforced.

9. Give children the responsibility for showing the classroom to visitors.

10. Hold an open house in the classroom so that children can show their parents how beautiful the class looks.

A Short Story

Mrs. S. had finally gotten the school to order a good size cubby for each child in the classroom.

For the first week everything went beautifully. The children were using the cubbies to store their sweaters when they came in and to place papers or crafts or notes that they were taking home. We even had a mailbox game where children identified envelopes with their names on and put them in their cubbies. Actually, the trouble started Monday. Jeremy brought his stuffed porpoise to school and was told that he could keep it in his cubby. This

started the idea that cubbies were a fine place to play. Now the children are bringing things from home and putting them in their cubbies. There is always turmoil in that section of the room as children hide or misplace somebody's cubby treasure. I guess I shouldn't have ordered cubbies afterall.

Do you agree that Mrs. S. should not have ordered cubbies? What do you feel the real problem is? How would you go about helping Mrs. S. solve the problem?

Problem Situations

Situation I

Mrs. Cassandra was the first parent to arrive at the child care center. Her son, Peter, was beautifully dressed with long pants, starched shirt and polished sandals. "I hope he will enjoy his lunch," Mrs. Cassandra commented. "I made him some carrots sticks, some fried chicken and some peeled apple slices for dessert. I put a bib in with this lunch. Perhaps you can help him put it on. Oh, yes, I know you serve milk to the children, so I included a special straw. He likes the kind that bends. And you'll be sure to open his milk carton for him. I don't want him to feel bad if he can't do it by himself."

"Don't worry," insisted Mr. Carter, "Peter will get along just fine. Why don't you run along and Peter will join the other children."

Despite Mr. Carter's assurances, the day did not go well for Peter. He cried at bathroom time because he couldn't undo his zipper. He cried on the playground because he wanted help going down the slide. He cried in the classroom because he couldn't get his crayons out of the box. "You're a big baby," Mary told him. "You cry too much." "He's a dummy," Carlota chimed in. "He don't know how to do anything."

Mr. Carter was concerned. He didn't like the way the other children were teasing Peter. At the same time, he didn't like the fact that Peter was constantly crying for help.

"Probably all that Mother's fault," Mr. Carter mumbled to himself. "She's overprotective, doing everything for that child. But perhaps," Mr. Carter mused on, "that's not the whole problem. Maybe Peter really isn't as capable of doing things as other children his age."

Mr. Carter decided that he needed to watch Peter more carefully in order to find out just how capable he was. At the same time he would have to structure some tasks for Peter that would present an appropriate challenge. Maybe he could begin by opening that milk carton half way.

What other suggestions do you have for Peter's teacher? How soon should he arrange a conference with Peter's mother? What approach should he use? How can Mr. Carter discourage the other children from making fun of Peter?

Situation II

For the fourth day in a row Mrs. Nelson's class was late for the playground. Mrs. Copland, the director, decided to find out why. When she went into the classroom before playground time, all the children were standing in line waiting to go out, all the children that is, except Clarence. Poor Clarence was all tied up in a tight looking sweater that would not go over his head. The more he struggled and yanked the worse the tangle became.

While Clarence was struggling with his sweater, Mrs. Nelson was lecturing her class:

"You know children, if you want to get along in this world you have to learn to do things for yourself. You know why Clarence is having trouble with his sweater? I'll tell you. Nobody has given him a chance to learn to do it by himself. Now you wait and see. If we can just be nice and patient Clarence will be able to get his own sweater on. Then he will really feel good about..."

Before Mrs. Nelson could finish her sentence, Bruce pushed Latroushka out of line and Latroushka retaliated by hitting Bruce on the head.

Mrs. Copland decided that she should set up an appointment with Mrs. Nelson. She jotted

down some points she wanted to make in the conference.

- *Don't go to extremes in demanding independence.*
- *Don't punish a whole class in the process of shaping the behavior of one child.*
- *Don't humiliate a child who is having a problem achieving a skill.*
- *If you feel Clarence should learn dressing skills, choose a more appropriate time and task.*

How would you expand on these points without making Mrs. Nelson defensive? What other points should Mrs. Copland make?

SCENE IV

THE CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Legislation for Handicapped Children

A major change in the status of the handicapped child was brought about by the passage in 1975 of P.L. 94-142, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act. Teachers of young children must be familiar with the main provisions of this act.

1. All children, regardless of handicap, are entitled to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.
2. Handicapped children, from 3-21, are entitled to educational services. (With the three-five year old child, there is a stipulation that educational requirements must be consistent with state law.)
3. Every child with a handicapping condition is entitled to an "IEP" which is an Individualized Educational Plan." The parents are included as participants in the education plan meeting.
4. Procedural safeguards, including protection in evaluation, due process, and confidentiality, are included in the law to protect the rights of handicapped children and their parents.

A Short Story

Mrs. Andrews was apprehensive all day. Sherry's mother was coming in for a teacher's conference. Sherry was a hearing impaired child placed in Mrs. Andrews' kindergarten as part of the mainstreaming program. Actually, despite her handicap, Sherry had been an easy child to work with. She was friendly, open and good natured and although her language was delayed, it was easy to understand. Yesterday was the first time Sherry had caused any kind of problem. For some reason Sherry was cross with Timothy and deliberately spilled his juice. Mrs. Andrews let Sherry sit for a few minutes on the quiet chair. Could this by why Sherry's mother had requested a conference? Maybe she had been too harsh with Sherry. Maybe she had not taken Sherry's handicap into consideration. Was Sherry's mother angry?

Despite Mrs. Andrews' fears, Sherry's mother was perfectly happy with the class. She asked questions about the philosophy of the school and the curriculum and volunteered to come in and help on her day off. Surprisingly, she didn't even mention the chair incident. Mrs. Andrews finally brought the incident up herself, even though she was positive that it would affect the rapport she had built up with Sherry's mother.

Mrs. Andrews:
"We had a minor problem yesterday—really for the first time."

Sherry's Mother:
"Oh, what happened?"

Mrs. Andrews:
"Sherry deliberately spilled another boy's juice."

Sherry's Mother:
"It sounds as if Sherry was out of sorts. How did you handle it?"

Mrs. Andrews:
"I asked her to sit in the quiet chair for a few minutes. She was fine after that.

Sherry's Mother:
"That's what I usually do at home when Sherry acts up. It seems to work well."

Mrs. Andrews was relieved. Not only was Sherry's mother not angry but she seemed pleased that her daughter was not being singled out for special treatment because of her handicap.

Fortunately for Sherry, both her mother and her teacher recognize the importance of meeting her total needs. A child with a handicap has the same need for positive and consistent discipline as any other child. If we fail to set reasonable expectations for a child with a handicap, we may be treating the handicap but mistreating the child.

Because every child is special in many ways, the term Special Child or Exceptional Child requires interpretation. When we talk about a Special Child, in an educational context, we are describing a small minority of children whose physical, intellectual and/or emotional characteristics suggest the need for special educational strategies.

Mainstreaming

Special Children in the Classroom

There was a time, not too far in the past, when physicians and educators advised parents of handicapped children to seclude them from the world as much as possible. These children were placed in institutions, segregated in special classes, or merely kept home and out of the way. In the 1980's this philosophy has changed drastically. Mainstreaming, not seclusion, is the new byword. Mainstreaming describes the philosophy of combining handicapped and non-handicapped children in the same setting. The philosophy is an outgrowth of a new awareness of the rights of the handicapped child, an awareness brought about by parent groups and child advocates who have struggled to make their voices heard. These groups have impacted on legislation and promoted the passage of public laws that protect the rights of handicapped children and provide services to meet their needs.

The first major public program to advocate the mainstreaming of handicapped children was Head Start. In 1972, Head Start programs were mandated to include 10 percent or more handicapped children and a major effort was made to recruit handicapped children into Head Start programs. The concept of mainstreaming handicapped children into the public schools was accepted somewhat later. In 1975, with the passage of P.L. 94-142, the All Handicapped Children's Act, the concept of "Least Restrictive Environment" was introduced and many children with minor or moderate handicaps were taken from special classes and placed in a regular classroom environment.

Mainstreaming is easier, in many ways, with preschool children than with school-age children. The emotional or behavioral problems often associated with being handicapped have not set in and young children accept children who are different more easily than do older children. The resulting experience can be mutually beneficial. The handicapped child has an opportunity to learn to cope in a social setting. He is exposed to the same set of experiences as other children and he has the opportunity to use non-handicapped children as models. For the non-handicapped child, interacting with a special needs child provides a lesson in understanding and sensitivity. The child learns to accept others who are somewhat different from himself and to perceive the world from another point of view.

Is Mainstreaming Always the Answer?

Mainstreaming works best in situations where the handicap is relatively mild. Children with very severe or multiple handicaps often need specialized services that cannot be supplied in a regular classroom. In addition, they are likely to need more adult time than the regular classroom teacher is able to devote. Unfortunately, there are some situations

where the mainstream concept is used as a means of denying special services to children. Especially in the early years, handicapped children may require a large share of adult attention, supervision and expertise.

Mainstreaming a preschool child may be a traumatic experience for a parent. As long as the child is at home, parents can focus on the child's accomplishments and avoid thinking about age norms. In a mainstream situation, parents are forced to recognize the differences between the behavior of their child and the behavior of the non-handicapped peer group.

Some Basic Guidelines for Integrating a Handicapped Preschool Child into a Regular Classroom

1. Consider the whole child. Look at her strengths as well as weaknesses.
2. Emphasize the ways the child is like other children, rather than the ways in which he/she is different.
3. Learn all you can about a child's specific disability. Consult with pediatricians, psychologists, physical, occupational and speech therapists, special ed teachers, etc. and keep current on techniques for working with a particular child.
4. Maximize interactions between handicapped and non-handicapped children.
   a. Give the other children simple, honest explanations about a child's disability.
   b. Read books or tell stories about children who are different. Encourage children to ask questions and voice their concerns.
   c. Encourage the handicapped child to give, as well as receive, help. Encourage him to share his strengths with others.
5. Individualize your program. Develop a special prescription for each child that will develop skills in sequences and that will offer the child many opportunities for success.
6. Keep in close contact with the parents of handicapped children. Parents have an intimate knowledge of their own child. This knowledge will be helpful to you in planning, evaluating and revising your program.

A Closer Look at the Special Needs Child

Putting labels on children with handicaps is a very sensitive issue. Parents and educators resist labelling young children for two reasons. In the first place, a label puts the focus on a child's disability, rather than her potential. In the second place, an inappropriate label can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. This is particularly true of children with an intellectual deficit.

Despite the pitfalls involved in labelling children, it is very difficult to meet the needs of children with handicaps without resorting to labels. In many instances, funding is categorical and we have to label a child's handicap in order to procure needed services. It is also important to recognize categories of handicapping conditions in order to develop management guidelines for the classroom teacher. In developing guidelines for preschool classrooms, it is best to use very general classifications. In line with this thinking, we will describe three general categories of preschool handicapped children.

1. The child with an intellectual disability
2. The sensory impaired child
3. The child with an orthopedia or health-related disability.

The Child with an Intellectual Handicap

When we talk about the child with an intellectual handicap, we are referring to the child who has been labeled mentally retarded. The definition of mental retardation has been a source of controversy. Typically, a mentally retarded child has been identified on the basis of a low score on a standardized IQ test. The exact score used to classify a child as mentally retarded, however, has varied widely from year to year, state to state and agency to agency. Mildly retarded, educable, trainable, severely retarded and profoundly retarded are terms that are used to indicate the severity of retardation.

As indicated by these labels, there are different degrees of retardation. Many mildly retarded children fit well into the normal daily preschool

routine. Children who are severely or profoundly retarded usually need special care not available in a regular classroom.

To further complicate matters, many children who are labeled mildly retarded are essentially normal children whose test scores are deflated by behavioral problems, lack of experience or cultural differences.

Causes of Retardation: There are a number of conditions associated with mental retardation. Prenatal causes include such things as chromosomal abnormalities and maternal disease. Problems at or around birth include: fetal anoxia, brain damage, metabolic disturbances and fetal alcohol syndrome.

Severe deprivation of stimulation or malnutrition during the early years can also result in retardation. In the majority of cases, the cause of retardation is not known. This situation is referred to as "idiopathic retardation."

Special Classroom Techniques for the Intellectually Handicapped Child

1. *Treat the intellectually handicapped child basically the same as the child with normal intelligence:* Children with intellectual handicaps can and do learn in a manner similar to normal children. The difference is in the rate of learning.

2. *Use concrete teaching strategies.* All young children learn best when presented with concrete materials. For children with intellectual deficits, the use of concrete materials is especially important. These children must be given many opportunities to see, feel, hear, touch and smell.

3. *Repetition is important:* The child with an intellectual handicap needs more chances to learn and practice a new skill than the normal child.

4. *Reinforcement is crucial:* Provide reinforcement through concrete rewards and praise.

5. *Give the child lots of opportunity to be successful.* Success creates confidence and confidence leads to success.

6. *Be consistent in terms of teacher behavior and classroom routine:* It takes the retarded child longer to figure out what is expected. Changes and inconsistencies will be confusing.

7. *Provide lots of language opportunities:* The child's intellectual ability will expand with development in language understanding and expression.

8. *Individualize your programs:* Provide the child with challenging tasks generated to his ability level.

9. *Learn to break tasks down into smaller components:* Children who learn slowly need to have tasks broken into half steps and quarter steps.

Sensory Handicaps

Visual Impairments

Some, but not all, children with visual handicaps have other handicapping conditions. Children whose only problem is visual impairment profit from the same educational experiences as the non-handicapped child.

Visually impaired children are classified into two categories: the partially seeing child (children whose vision is 20/70-20/200 in the corrected better eye) and blind children (whose vision is 20/200 or less). Some children classified as blind have some limited sight or light perception.

Classroom Guidelines

1. *Emphasize Concrete Experiences:* A child with a visual impairment will have to feel, see, hear and touch to understand an object. Concepts must be built through systematic concrete experiences.

2. *Make the Environment Safe and Consistent:* Set up the environment so that paths are unobstructed and there is room for free movement. Do not make a change without informing the child.

3. *Develop Tactile Paths and Markers:* Providing special tactile cues such as raised path on the floor to indicate the way to the bathroom, a line of tape down the hall to indicate the way to the playground, a shape cut from material on the side of a shelf to indicate specific areas will help the child move more independently.

4. *Emphasize Auditory Training:* Teach the child to be a good listener, to identify environmental sounds. Talk to the child to let her know where you are in the room.

5. *Encourage Independence:* Let the child move about as freely as possible. Encourage the child to move toward your voice.

6. *Emphasize Language Experience:* Teach language concepts through concrete objects and experiences.

7. *Avoid Placing the Child in Situations Which Are Noisy and Confusing:* Talk to the child about where she's going as you walk with her. "Now we are on the grass. Now the floor is hard," etc...Pair the child with a sighted partner. Teach the whole class to provide auditory cues such as tapping on chairs when the child is expected to sit.

Hearing Impaired Children

Total deafness is rare in preschool children. Mild or moderate hearing problems are more frequent. Many times these losses are not discovered until they are identified by an alert teacher. A child with hearing difficulties has the following symptoms:

1. Delayed language or poor articulation or attention.
2. Lack of responsiveness when spoken to.
3. Often says "huh?" or "what?"
4. Watches the speaker's face.
5. Speaks in a loud voice.

Guidelines for Working with the Hearing Impaired Child

1. Make sure to stand in front of the child *where she can see you when you are talking.* Stay within close range of the child while you speak.

2. *Talk slowly and enunciate clearly* but use a normal conversational tone of voice.

3. *Speak in short sentences.*

4. *Use frequent repetition.*

5. *Use your voice to get the child's attention.* Say her name and make sure she is looking at you before you begin to speak.

6. *Check the child's hearing aid.* Make sure it's being worn.

7. *Encourage the other children to speak clearly.*

8. Do not stand with your back to the light. The child who is watching your lips will have problems with glare.

Orthopedic and Health Related Problems

There are many different conditions which come under the general heading of physical or health related handicaps. Some of these conditions are acquired at birth as the result of disease or injury.

The most common physical and health related handicaps found in preschool children are on the chart on page 119.

Classroom Guidelines

1. The environment should be set up to allow the physically handicapped child as much freedom of movement as possible. Arrangements should be made so that the child is part of the group during group activities such as eating, circle time, etc.

2. Remember the child with a physical handicap does not necessarily have an intellectual handicap.

3. Children with physical handicaps have not had the same opportunities to explore the environment as non-handicapped children. Therefore, they often have difficulty grasping concepts that involve spatial relationships. Special help in this area may be necessary.

4. Learning disabilities and speech impairment may be associated with cerebral palsy. A teacher needs to be able to assess the child's total functioning to determine what kinds of teaching strategies will be most effective.

5. Handicaps often impede social adjustments. Physically handicapped children often need special assistance in learning to get along with their peers.

6. Encourage the development of motor abilities. Enlist the aid of the psychologist, physical therapist or pediatrician and develop a prescriptive program.

Guidelines for the Preschool Teacher that Apply to All Handicapped Children

1. Meet the total needs of the child, not just the special needs associated with the handicap.
2. Learn as much as you can about handicaps of the children in your classroom.
3. Make sure that you have emergency numbers and emergency instructions.
4. Keep in close touch with the child's parents.
5. Be reasonable in your expectations. Expecting either too much or too little can be damaging.
6. Be honest about your own feelings. It is easier to deal with our own biases if we can recognize them.
7. Help the other children in your classroom to see beyond the handicap.

Condition	Characteristics	Types
Cerebral Palsy	Cerebral Palsy (C.P.) is a brain disorder which results in difficulties with movement and coordination.	*Spastic C.P.*—The child's movements are stiff and jerky. *Athetoid C.P.*—The child lacks muscle tone and extraneous uncontrolled movements are present. *Atoxic C.P.*—The child has problems with balance.
Epilepsy	Epilepsy is a neurological disorder involving seizures or convulsions. It is usually controlled by medication.	*Grand Mal*—The seizures are severe and the child moves in a jerky uncontrolled way. *Petit Mal*—Seizures are mild and usually frequent. The child seems out of touch during a seizure.
Spina Bifida	Spina Bifida is a disorder associated with an abnormality of the spinal cord. The child may have lower limb paralysis and incontinence (lacks bladder, bowel control).	Sometimes associated with hydrocephalus (water on the brain), which requires a special drain-off tube called a "shunt" to control the build-up of fluid in the brain.
Diabetes	Diabetes is a metabolic disorder in which the child is unable to metabolize sugar.	
Asthma	Asthma is an allergic condition resulting in laborious breathing.	

ACT VI

BACKSTAGE

SCENE I

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

"Researchers who have expanded their focus to include the home as a part of the student's learning have found that it is a significant part of the support system that enables young children to learn."*

Rationale for Parent Involvement

Teacher 1: I have tried so many times to get Gary's mother to come to the center. I just don't know what to do any more.

Teacher 2: Yes. It seems that it is most difficult to see those parents whose children have the greatest need. Sometimes I feel that it is a lost cause. So many parents don't care about their children.

This is one example of how teachers become discouraged with parents. This discouragement often leads to cynicism and a belief that attempts at parent involvement are doomed to failure. While it is easy to understand how this attitude develops, most of us know, intuitively, that the majority of parents care very deeply about their children. Many factors, totally unrelated to degree of concern, play a role in the involvement of parents in the school life and education of their children. For example:

1. Some parents are consumed with problems of more immediate concern and do not have time or energy to devote to school.

2. Many parents have negative impressions regarding their own school experience and are reluctant to become part of the process.

3. Many parents feel unequipped to deal with teachers. This is especially so in the case of low income parents, who sometimes feel inferior educationally and/or financially. They may feel that they have nothing to contribute.

4. Some parents feel that they are blamed for their child's shortcomings and that any difficulties experienced by their children are a reflection on their knowledge, goodness or abilities as parents.

5. In many cases the staff has not made a convincing overture to parents—attempting to make them feel not only welcome, but needed.

Most preschool educators agree that parents are critical to the center's efforts to care for and educate their children. The problem arises when teachers attempt to translate this knowledge or this philosophy into practice in the classroom.

- How do we really involve parents in the life of the center?
- Are the parents sufficiently knowledgeable regarding educational goals and methods?
- Do they have reasonable expectations?
- Are they too demanding?
- What about those parents who do not seem to care about their children?

Your first step as a preschool teacher is to arm yourself with a firm commitment to the concept of parental involvement and a clear understanding of its importance to the children in your care. With this preparation you will be able to overcome the inevitable disappointments and setbacks and develop a program based on realistic expectations, geared to creating maximum positive impact on all the people connected to the center, teachers, parents and children.

The following is a rationale for parent involvement. It is included here, in the belief that commitment is an outgrowth of knowledge.

*Mary Frank (Ed.). Children in Contemporary Society (Bethesda, Md.: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 167 275, 1979), p. 5.

Teachers must have a thorough understanding of the concept if they are to support it and work toward programmatic implementation.

1. The first, and perhaps most important, consideration is that parents have the right and the duty to be involved in the educational lives of their children. We must never forget that the ultimate responsibility for the child's welfare rests with his parents. The thrust of our efforts should be to support the parent's role with a sound educational program.

2. The presence of parents and our concern for their input and involvement helps us to remember that each child is a valued member of a dynamic family, with a unique set of attributes and abilities, worthy of our attention, respect and concern.

3. Parents can provide information that aids our understanding of some aspect of the child's behavior in school. Learning that a child is not allowed to play with other children at home helps us to understand his quiet, withdrawn manner at school. A sensitive teacher will work toward building this child's social skills by drawing him into interaction with other children.

4. By introducing concepts of child development, we help parents to establish reasonable expectations and goals for their children. A parent who is concerned about her four year old's regression to infantile behavior, since the birth of his sister, can be easily reassured by the knowledge that this is a perfectly normal response.

5. Regular contact with parents helps us to discover their talents. A wise teacher is always on the lookout for people with special talents or abilities or whose occupations or hobbies are of interest to the children. Although we must be sure to communicate that all parents have the skills necessary to assist in regular classroom activities, there are a few who can provide a special resource for the children.

6. The unique perspective that parents can offer is an important ingredient in program development and evaluation. We must provide a system of input for parental thoughts, feelings, ideas and reactions. This contribution can help us to understand parental needs and serve as a major benefit to the center's program.

7. A healthy relationship with parents creates the best possible public relations and advertising program. Satisfied parents, who are knowledgeable about the school program, will be amazingly supportive.

8. Parents are in an excellent position to assist our educational efforts at home. When they are aware of the goals and purposes of school activities, they can learn to recognize and then reinforce emerging skills.

9. There are many problems which can be solved better at home than at school. The establishment of healthy channels of communication insures that parents will understand and support our requests for cooperation.

10. Children benefit from seeing that their parents and teachers work together in their behalf.

11. Parents benefit by developing the knowledge and self-confidence necessary to function as advocates for their children.

12. Parent involvement is an effort toward the establishment of common aims and goals, so that the labors of home and school are consistent. The greater the congruence between the values and objectives of home and school, the greater the impact of each.

13. Finally, and perhaps the most important, is our realization that we are the child's teacher for only one or two years. The effect that we have during that time, however great, cannot match that of the parent, who influences the child throughout his formative years. The parent is the child's real teacher. We have the greatest impact when we share our knowledge and ability with the child's parents, extending our influence into the child's future.

Strategies for Involving Parents

Once teachers realize that genuine parent involvement can benefit children and, therefore, support the center's efforts, they are left at the same point as the two teachers whose conversation we overheard a short while back. It is extremely discouraging to seek out parental input and find either no response or little genuine interest.

Teachers should realize that, even in the best situation, we never will reach everyone. There are parents who can't or won't extend their involvement beyond transporting their child to and from school. But this fact alone should not discourage us. We must focus on involving the largest number of parents possible. Any effort we make will produce an increase of involvement, which is a benefit to all concerned. This is sufficient reason to make the effort.

On the following pages is a list of strategies one can use to involve parents in the education and center-based care of their children. The list is not exhaustive. An experienced teacher will be able to add a number of ideas. However, the list does cover the major areas and is meant to serve as a starting point for new teachers or to provide suggestions for the experienced teacher. Feel free to combine, augment, adapt or pull apart anything you read. This list should support your efforts.

1. *Informal Contacts:* The first, and possibly the easiest, strategy is to take advantage of every encounter with parents, however brief. Our contact with some parents will be limited to two moments each day, when the child is delivered and picked up. A staff member should be at the door to greet the parent and child, to make both feel welcome upon arrival. Once the child is engaged in an activity in another part of the room, we have an opportunity to speak to the parent and communicate whatever information is important at that moment.

2. *Family Room:* Another suggestion, which would be helpful in drawing parents into the center is the creation of a parent or family room. The best placement for this facility is near the door, to attract parents as they come in daily. But, since space is always a major concern in a day care center or school, the family area can be located wherever there is room. This should be a comfortable spot where people feel free to relax. The family room should have:

a. coffee
b. magazines
c. information on safety, health, nutrition
d. information on child development
e. craft suggestions and samples
f. information on community services
g. the center program, special events, holidays, field trips, names of staff members
h. a place to change babies
i. children's toys

Parent Handbook: The development of a parent handbook is a good way to answer parental questions and address common concerns. Items to include in a parent handbook are the following:

a. introduction to the history of the center
b. information on policies—hours, fees, enrollment procedures, etc., lunches, snacks, late arrival and pickup
c. list of supplies and clothing parents must purchase or bring to the center
d. frequency of reporting to parents, parent-teacher conferences, phone conversations, home visits, etc.
e. information on child development
f. parent meetings and other activities
g. a section with frequently asked questions and concise answers
h. the daily schedule
i. volunteer opportunities

4. *Parent Conferences:* Parent conferences should be held on a regular basis, not only when the child misbehaves or has an educational problem. It is an opportunity for parent and teacher to share information about the child and for the parent to learn about the school program. Below are suggestions for conducting successful conferences:

a. Send home a notice informing parents of the conference. Include a rationale for the conference and reasonable expectations. A list of suggested questions, basic in nature, should be included. In this notice ask parents to specify an appointment time to conform to their schedule.
b. Remember to confirm the appointment beforehand.
c. Make a special call to those parents who do not respond to the notice.
d. Provide baby sitting for those parents who need it.
e. Be prepared. Have the child's work folder ready for display.
f. Discuss the child's strengths as well as weaknesses.
g. Emphasize what you and the parent can do together to help the child.

h. Discuss the goals and objectives of the program and the planned activities of the center.
i. Listen to the parent and respond to his/her concerns.
j. Maintain a warm, cordial atmosphere. Both you and the parent are interested in the child's welfare and educational progress.

5. Large Group Meetings: Large group parent or family meetings should be held on a regular basis. It is an opportunity for parents to meet, share ideas, discuss problems and learn from each other. It serves, also, as a vehicle for effective communication with many people at one time. Some suggestions for organizing group meetings:

a. Notify parents and include an RSVP. In this way, you have an idea of the number of people who will attend. Also, you can follow up on those who don't respond.
b. Provide baby sitting.
c. Schedule evening as well as daytime meetings to insure attendance by the greatest number.
d. Provide refreshments.
e. Develop the program according to the needs of the parents:
- •offer information about the school program
- •present films or speakers on child development, toilet training, sibling rivalry, eating habits, discipline, etc.

f. Involve parents in deciding what to present.
g. Evaluate meetings using anonymous questionnaires submitted at the end of the meeting and informally, through the grapevine.
h. Use the information gained from the evaluations to plan the content of the subsequent meetings.

6. Newsletters: The regular distribution of a newsletter is an excellent way to communicate with parents. It demonstrates the center's concern for sharing information and reaches those parents who, otherwise, have little direct contact with the center. Items to be included in the newsletter are:

a. information on field trips or special events
b. notification of all meetings
c. requests for donations of useable junk
d. requests for volunteers and expressions of recognition and gratitude to those parents who have assisted the program
e. craft suggestions
f. reports on school "happenings"
g. introduction of new staff members
h. tips for teaching skills at home
i. recipes for nutritious snacks
j. weekly menus so that parents can plan complementary home meals

7. Family Bulletin Board: A good place for the family bulletin board is near the entrance to the center and/or in the family room. Some suggestions:

a. copies of notices and newsletters
b. pictures of children at work and play
c. notices of community events
d. advertisements by individual parents
e. requests for volunteers
f. parent activity chart
g. interesting articles from newspapers and magazines
h. weekly menus.

8. Telephone Calls: An effective way of communicating with those parents with whom we don't have regular contact is by initiating monthly telephone calls. This is ample demonstration of the concern and involvement of the center and fosters a home-school relationship where one would otherwise not exist.

9. Parent Volunteers: The use of parent volunteers has an impact on two important areas. It can supply an extra pair of hands to an understaffed center. In addition, it provides a systematic route for involvement of those parents who have special skills or talents or who enjoy donating their time and working with children. You can recruit volunteers at the time of initial enrollment, through regular contact with parents and by using a parent activity chart. This is simply a sign-up list, placed on the bulletin board, enlisting parents' help as volunteers and offering them a choice of dates, times and types of contributions.

10. Fundraising: Parents can initiate or become involved in fundraising efforts such as cake sales, book sales, craft sales, raffles, bingo, film series, auctions, theater and concert dates, dinner/dance, etc.

11. Classroom Observation: Although avoided and possibly feared by many staff members, a program of classroom observation is one of the best ways to create a strong bond between school and home. Parents learn about the center's program and develop an increased understanding of the difficult task faced by teachers daily. The staff can prepare for visitation by determining the time restrictions that are necessary, by thorough planning of activities, by preparing the children for visitors and by creating a system of feedback for parents in order to answer questions generated by the visit.

12. Home Visits: So much information can be learned by visiting the child's home that this strategy should not be overlooked. In addition to what we learn by making a home visit, we are demonstrating our concern in a concrete, tangible way.

13. Toy Lending Library: For those centers with sufficient resources, a toy or book lending library is an excellent way to interact with and influence the child's family. The success of this strategy, however, is based on the establishment of a workable system for checking out and returning materials.

14. Class Parent: If one parent in each group will assume the responsibility to contact and coordinate the other parents of children in that group, the teacher's burden will be reduced significantly. The additional advantage of this strategy is that those parents who are reluctant to share real concerns with a teacher may feel more comfortable doing so with another parent.

15. Daily Contact: Teachers can make contact with the parents and inform them of daily activities by sending home work samples with the child. If parents take an interest in their child's daily work (a point to emphasize at parent meeting and in the newsletter), they learn more about the program and create an opportunity to praise their child. You can also send home "happygrams" or stars in order to reinforce acceptable classroom behavior.

16. Parent Advisory Committee: Creation of a PAC is a major step for most centers. It provides parents with an institutionalized mechanism for input with regard to the program, activities and goals of the center. Before initiating the formation of a PAC, you must consider its role and lay the foundation accordingly. Will the group be an advisory body only? Will it function simply as a conduit of information to the community? Will staff members be part of the group? Will the group have input regarding hiring and evaluation of center personnel? The role and function of the PAC will have an enduring effect on the center. The issue of the PAC is one that many centers choose not to face because of the problems that may arise. But, when successful, a PAC can be a tremendous asset to the effective functioning of the center.

The last and, perhaps, the most important consideration in the development of a sound parent involvement program is the attitude of the director and the staff. If the staff is hostile or apprehensive, no effort will hide this from the parents. A teacher's desire for an open and honest relationship with parents will be obvious during every meeting every conversation, every contact. We must remember that teachers are the critical element in the process of parent participation. If they are warm and supportive, they become key to the program's success. It is a contradiction to espouse professional concern for children and then ignore the needs of their parents and families. Children live, learn and grow in a context. We work with and, therefore, influence, the whole child only when we work with his family, too. When a director and staff realize the importance of parents and work to include them in the life of the center, they are well on their way toward creating a successful program for their community.

SCENE II

WORKING AS A TEAM

"I think it is a useful general proposition that we cannot have optimum environments for children in centers and classrooms unless we have optimum environments for teachers and caretakers."*

Lillian Katz

The second section of Act VI, working with adults in a child care situation, focuses on staff development and staff relations. These issues are clearly of critical importance to the long-range effective operation of a child care center. If we remember that day care is a labor intensive activity, with staff costs accounting for a huge proportion of the financial outlay, we begin to realize the importance of the staff in relation to the total effort. Beyond finances, no one can seriously argue with the notion that the effectiveness of an educational effort, especially in the case of day care and early education, is directly related to the issue of staffing.

In this section we look at a number of issues related to staff development: staff selection, in-service training, and the staff as a team.

Staff Selection

The first important task in the development of a good child care staff is careful selection. All too often, however, the director finds herself in a situation in which the need for additional staff is critical and a thorough screening and investigation of applicants is impossible. She may be ready to hire the first person who inquires about employment or who is recommended for a position with only the most cursory consideration of background, credentials, ability or knowledge. When a staff member leaves unexpectedly, regardless of the reason, it usually creates a frenzy of activity, a situation not conducive to the screening of prospective employees in an orderly fashion.

Rather than accept this situation as an inevitable part of the director's job, one can prepare for the on-going need to find the best qualified employees by devising a system of screening and selection and by keeping a file of job applicants and a list of previously screened individuals who are still looking for employment.

The goal of preparation is to avoid the mistakes that inevitably accompany a frantic search for a new employee to cover a class. Since the quality of the staff is the variable most closely linked to success of the center, a great deal of thought and effort should be generated in the process of selection.

The task of staff selection can be subdivided into logical steps, each with its own set of appropriate actions. The purpose here is not to create a how-to list, but to set out a series of principles which can be implemented according to the individual needs and special circumstances of your center.

Job Description

The first step in the process of staff selection is to develop a clear idea of what you are looking for. Think of the teacher's job and create a job description or a list of what a good teacher must do during the course of a typical day. Now consider the qualities and abilities that a person who can perform these duties well would possess. Below is a list of some of the characteristics, duties and responsibilities of a good child care worker:

- love for children
- patience
- ability to function as part of a team
- fairness
- desire for professional growth
- ability to establish warm, friendly relationships with children
- ability to relate to diversity
- ability to relate to parents

*Kevin J. Swick, Mac H. Brown, and Tim Watson, "Perspectives on Family Assisted Learning," *Children Our Concern V* (June, 1980): 8.

•willingness to work overtime when necessary
•ability to use supplies and equipment in an educational manner
•ability to take direction
•initiative
•understanding the importance and the methods of record keeping
•knowledge of child development
•knowledge of teaching methods
•ability to assess individual needs

Once there is a clear idea of the attributes you are looking for, you increase your chances of identifying the person who possesses these attributes, either by observation or intuition.

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At this moment, there is a surplus of teachers and people who are interested in working in day care. Since directors, generally, know many people who would like to work in their centers, they sometimes feel it is unnecessary to perform a wider search. This is usually an error. The success of your selection process is dependent on the quality of the pool of applicants for the position. One should look beyond the immediate situation and reach out to the larger community, which may include: referrals from other centers, people who have previously submitted applications and resumes, people recommended by employees or directors of other centers. You may wish to recruit from a local college and place advertisements in professional newsletters or magazines. Although these suggestions will certainly increase the selection task, they will also increase its chances of success.

Interviewing

The critical step in the selection process is the interview. Since you probably won't have time (nor is it desirable) to interview every applicant, you must make preliminary decisions based on the application forms and resumes of the candidates. First to be eliminated are those who clearly are missing what you consider to be the minimum qualifications, whether your concern is educational background, experience or evidence of success in previous work situations. This initial screening should narrow the field to a reasonable number and prepare you for the interview process.

The interview itself should be planned well beforehand. It is necessary to decide who will conduct the interview. The director? A committee of teachers? Will parents be represented on the committee? Whatever the representation, you must remember that, for purposes of comparison, the same people should be present for each interview.

The types of questions should also be determined beforehand. Although there should be a core of questions for all the candidates, it is appropriate to ask specific questions based on each applicant's unique background and experience, as indicated on the resume or application.

Once the field is narrowed to two or three candidates, the references should be called in order to gather additional information. Another technique used to make the final judgment is an observation of the candidate working with a group of children. This is one of the most effective tools at your disposal and should be part of the final selection process.

You should remember that the interview actually has a purpose beyond assisting you in the selection of an employee. The applicant comes to the selection process with little real information about the job. The interview is a way for her to learn about you, your center, the job, salary, benefits and working conditions. These issues should be decided well before you speak with prospective employees.

Final Selection

Your final selection will be based upon all the information you have gathered during the entire process, application, resume, interview, recommendations and observation of work with groups of children. You will choose the candidate who most closely fits the job description and list of characteristics that you considered at the beginning of the process.

Training

There is, perhaps, no greater key to the improvement and growth of a day care staff than in-service training. Frequently, however, training is considered either unnecessary, too difficult to

accomplish effectively or a frill, beyond the scope and resources of a small center. In fact, on-going, in-service training is a critical component of any educational effort.

The first issue we face in a discussion of training is, actually, an outgrowth of the previous section on selection. Quite often, the rush of events and the constraints of time and multiple responsibilities prevent the director from providing the new employee with an in-depth orientation to her new responsibilities. However, the orientation is important and should not be overlooked. It can begin with a social event, during which the new employee meets the staff and, possibly, the parents too. This sets the stage for a cordial relationship. The new employee should learn about the philosophy and goals of the center and the methods and plans for implementing these goals. In addition, she should receive a packet of materials containing procedures for fire and accidents, ordering supplies, communicating with parents, etc. In summary, if the new employee learns about the center, its philosophy, staff, clientele and procedures beforehand, loyalty to the center is generated and the beginning of the work experience will be satisfying.

As we address the question of in-service training, we look at three major components—assessment (identification of training needs), planning and implementation and, finally, evaluation of our efforts.

Assessment

All too often the director assumes a complete knowledge of the training needs of her staff. It is true that she is in an excellent position to make accurate judgments in this area. She was instrumental in developing the educational philosophy of the center and knows the weaknesses in the implementation of that philosophy. The problem arises, however, when the director attempts to make this decision without input from other quarters. The wise director realizes that others, too, have a unique perspective and can contribute to the decision regarding which issues are critical and must be addressed by training. Teachers are in a good position to make this contribution. They work with the children on a daily basis and are keenly aware of areas of need and aspects of the job which they perform less expertly than they would wish. The input of parents can be valuable as well. A director should be aware of concern expressed by parents over a period of time. When these concerns can be alleviated or, in some way, attended to by training staff, the director has skillfully turned the situation to her advantage.

Planning and Implementation

The implementation phase must be based on careful thought and planning. If you have gone to the trouble of assessing the need for training by surveying the staff, considering expressed needs of parents and thinking about program goals, you should make sure that the chosen training plan fits the pattern of strengths and weaknesses of the staff and program. You may consider offering workshops yourself, using staff members who have demonstrated strength in various areas, combining resources with other centers, looking into what local colleges and universities have to offer, establishing visitation opportunities for teachers within your center, visiting other centers for observation and discussion, providing demonstrations lessons for your staff, released time for staff, etc.

The most important point to consider when planning an in-service program is to tailor it directly to the needs of the staff. Make sure their time is well spent and that they are being exposed to information that they can put to use immediately. They must feel that they are benefitting from their experience.

Evaluation

The last important step in the training process is evaluation. How do you know whether your staff is benefitting from a particular approach to training? How do you know which approach is producing results? The answer is that you don't really know unless you have used a formal or informal tool to assess either learning, training preferences or implementation of suggestions. Whether you choose to use an examination, a preference type questionnaire or, simply, your observation to check whether new methods are being implemented in the classroom, some form of evaluation is critical.

The Staff As A Team

The ability of the staff to provide the best for children, day after day, depends, to a great extent, on whether individuals have learned to work together harmoniously, as a team. Those who have worked in schools and day care centers, as teachers or directors, know that achieving harmony among staff members is no easy task. Given the importance of the product, however, a more effective child care environment, we must do all we can to achieve that goal.

From the perspective of the director, much can be done to increase employee motivation and job satisfaction. The key to effective management is the creation of a work situation in which teachers are satisfied with themselves and their professional roles. The sensitive director is aware that a productive work environment is one in which people feel free to express themselves in their daily interaction and strive to perform at their optimal levels.

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the discussion of a number of principles and strategies for establishing and maintaining harmony between day care colleagues.

1. Job descriptions should be clear and reviewed and revised regularly. The job description, once communicated and understood, becomes the basis for creating employee objectives and evaluating performance.

2. Employees should take part in setting individual, work-related goals, as an outgrowth of the job description.

3. Employees should be given the opportunity to rate their own progress and share in the evaluation process with the director.

4. The director should give employees recognition in the presence of their peers. On the other hand, all criticism should be given in private.

5. Work should be distributed equitably. Employees should feel that they are being treated fairly by the director.

6. Formulate specific rewards for good performance and consequences for poor performance. This information should be contained in a personnel policy statement or handbook.

7. Develop accountability procedures that are well defined and universally understood. This serves as a basis of communication with employees and can be used as part of the evaluation procedure.

8. Take action to reduce stress and avoid burn-out:
   a. Modify work environment.
   b. Acknowledge problems and work jointly with employees to make changes.
   c. Establish realistic goals.
   d. Provide motivation and challenge by supporting job change.

9. Encourage independence by delegating responsibility and supporting employee initiative.

10. Provide released time for visitations of other classrooms and other centers. Make sure there is adequate time for sharing experiences afterwards.

11. Help keep open the lines of communications by establishing:
   a. staff bulletin board
   b. mailboxes
   c. staff room
   d. suggestion box

The role of the director in promoting harmony between staff members cannot be overstated. Galinsky and Hooks (1977), in an analysis of successful child care programs across the country, found a number of similarities between the directors of the programs.

1. The directors had a dream or vision and were willing to fight to overcome barriers to achieve their goals.

2. The directors had a belief in the importance of their programs to the families of their communities.

3. Each had an ability to select strong staff after a careful selection process. No snap judgments were made. Hiring was on a provisional basis in an effort to make sure that those hired conformed to expectations.

4. The directors felt a strong familial bond with employees and communicated this feeling effectively.

5. The staff members were allowed a large measure of independence.

Promoting positive staff relations is crucial to the healthy operation of a child care center. Staff members who are treated well and are happy with their jobs and who like and respect each other, will produce the extra commitment necessary to make a center work for the children and the community. The wise director considers her actions in light of their effect on her staff. She knows that her efforts toward the development of a competent, committed, hard-working staff will be repaid many times over in the form of a fine program for children, parents and teachers.

Ellen Galinsky and William J. Hooks, *The New Extended Family* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.: 1977).

SCENE III

FROM THE CRITIC'S CORNER

A Short Story

Setting: A city bus

Although she was not in the habit of eavesdropping on other people's conversations, Mrs. Burger listened intently to the mothers across the aisle. Apparently, they were discussing the Little Dipper Nursery School where Mrs. Burger was thinking about putting her son.

Mother I: Aren't you Jamie's mother?

Mother II: Yes, I am. How did you know?

Mother I: I was at the Little Dipper Nursery School yesterday when you came to pick up your son. I'm Melanie's mother.

Mother II: Oh yes, Jamie talks about Melanie all the time. Is it true that Melanie won't be coming back to the Little Dipper?

Mother I: It certainly is. I wouldn't keep her in that place another day!

Mother II: How come? Jamie absolutely loves it. He can't wait to leave the house in the morning.

Mother I: Melanie loves it, too, but that doesn't make it a good program. Have you even bothered to find out what they do with the kids all day?

Mother II: I don't have to snoop around the place. Jamie leaves happy and he comes home happy and that's good enough for me.

Unfortunately for our eavesdropper, Mrs. Burger, Mother I, had come to her bus stop and that ended the conversation. Poor Mrs. Burger. She was more confused than ever about the merits of the Little Dipper Nursery School.

When we ask parents to evaluate the school that their child attends, it is natural that their opinions will be influenced by their own ideas about what a school should provide. Melanie's mother was critical of the Little Dipper Nursery School because it did not have a structured academic program. Jamie's mother, on the other hand, was delighted with the school because it provided a cheerful, non-pressured environment that made her son happy.

Both mothers were accurate in their assessment of Little Dipper. Jamie's mother was right about the warm and relaxed atmosphere. Melanie's mother was right about the program being non-academic. The reason the mothers disagreed about the merits of the Little Dipper School was that they did not agree on the characteristics or criteria that define a quality school. No evaluation or judgment can be used as the basis for making a decision unless the criterion for making the judgment is spelled out clearly.

In this chapter, we are concerned with the procedures for developing evaluation systems that can be used as the basis of decision making. Our discussion focused on three questions:

1. How can we evaluate the quality of our program?
2. How can we assess the performance of children?
3. How can we evaluate our own performance?

Evaluating A Child-Care Program

As we learned from the conversation between our two mothers, reaching a concensus as to what constitutes good child-care is, in itself, a difficult task. One way to evaluate a program is to bring in outside observers who use a set of written or unwritten performance standards. A second way tol evaluate a program is to investigate the degree to which the goals and objectives of the program are accomplished. If goals and objectives for a program have not been developed in advance, it is important for the program staff to develop a set of goals and objectives that can be used as the basis for evaluation. These goals and objectives should describe the program expectations:

1. Relating to the children
2. Relating to the staff
3. Relating to the classroom environment
4. Relating to the parents

The following outline can be used for developing a set of expectations or criteria that can be used to evaluate your center.

A. Outcomes related to children
1. Socialization skills
2. Self-help skills
3. Language development
4. Intellectual development
5. Motor skills
6. Task orientation

B. Outcomes related to staff
1. Rapport with children
2. Rapport with parents and other staff members
3. Classroom organization and management skills
4. Ability to implement a curriculum
5. Professional skills (preparation, punctuality, record keeping, etc.)

C. Outcomes related to environment
1. Indoor environment is organized, attractive and safe
2. Outdoor environment is organized, attractive and safe
3. Noise level within classroom is appropriate
4. Materials are appropriate, available and in good repair

D. Outcomes related to parents
1. Parents demonstrate active interest in their own children
2. Parents participate in the program
3. Parents are satisfied that the program is meeting the needs of their children

E. Outcomes related to objectives
Program is on target in achieving its own objective

Assessing the Development of Children

Keeping records on the behavior and performance of children is an important way of measuring the success of a program. It is not, however, the only reason for collecting information on children. We collect information on children in order to:
a. Plan a program that is responsive to their individual needs
b. Identify children who require special help
c. Monitor progress on an ongoing basis
d. Report progress to parents

The type of information about children that we collect is determined by the nature of our program, the resources we have for collecting information and how we intend to use the information.

1. *Collecting information as the basis for program planning.* The easiest and, in most cases, the best way to get information about children is to ask their parents. In some cases we may want parents to fill out a questionnaire at home. In other cases it may be better for the teacher to fill out the questionnaire in a conference with the parent. A sample questionnaire is on page 113. (University School of Nova University)

2. *Collecting information to identify children with problems.* In some child care settings all children are given a formal or informal screening test as they enter the program. This screening test is used both to determine individual needs and strengths and to identify children who should be referred for in-depth testing. More frequently, formal screening is implemented only where there is in indication of a problem. The chart on page 134 can be used in the selection of a screening instrument to meet your particular needs.

3. Monitoring Progress. Although screening tests can provide useful information, they cannot be used exclusively to identify children who need special help. When teachers or parents are concerned about problem or maladaptive behavior, systematic observations are used instead of, or in addition to, screening tests.

The types of observations that are used depend upon the nature of the problem and the staff resources of the program. The three types of observations that are used most frequently are:

- *Time Sampling:* Time sampling is useful when a child is exhibiting more than one type of behavior that appears to be maladaptive. In time sampling the observer records all of the behavior that occurs over a given space of time. Time sampling is particularly useful for identifying cause-effect relationships on patterns of behavior. Through time sampling we may discover, for instance, that a child sucks his thumb or has a temper tantrum only when he has been repulsed by another child.

- *Event Sampling:* Event sampling involves systematic recording of a particular behavior (hitting, kicking, biting) during a specific time segment. It is especially useful in measuring the effectiveness of an intervention strategy. (Does a child hit other children less often when a time-out plan is implemented?)

- *Anecdotal Recording:* Whereas time sampling and event sampling require bringing an observer into the classroom, anecdotal recording can be carried out by the regular classroom teacher. Anecdotal recording involves keeping a journal on a particular child. Events are described in the journal that either typify the behavior that concerns the teacher or suggest a change in that behavior.

Gathering Information to Use as the Basis of Curriculum Decisions: One of the most striking differences that we find in different preschool models is in the kind of records that are kept. In programs that emphasize play, creativity and discovery learning, records of performance may be minimal. In programs that are highly structured and/or highly individualized, records of task performance may be quite detailed. Here is a sample record of task performance.

Rowen, Betty; Byrne, Joan; and Winter, Lois. *The Learning Match.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980.

Staff Evaluation

Assessing the performance of the staff can be a delicate situation. It is especially difficult for a director to make any negative statements about a very good staff member. Developing a set of guidelines for staff evaluations that are distributed at the beginning of the year is very helpful.

Sample Set of Guidelines for Staff Evaluation

1. Staff evaluations are completed on a regular basis.
2. Evaluation forms are distributed to both the supervisor (director) and the staff member.
3. The evaluation form is completed independently by both the director and the staff member. (The staff member is responsible for self-evaluation.)
4. The supervisor and the staff member share the evaluation forms and discuss differences.
5. The supervisor's evaluation form is signed by the staff member and placed in his/her personnel folder.

In a small child care setting, where there are only one or two staff members, evaluation may be carried out informally by parents. In these situations self-evaluation is especially important. Each of us needs the opportunity to look at ourselves in the mirror. Are we happy with what we are doing? What are our strong points? What are our weak points? How can we grow as professionals?

Reporting to Parents

In *The Learning Match*[1] Betty Rowen makes several important points about reporting to parents.

1. Reporting to parents should be an ongoing responsibility and should not be restricted to periodic written communications.
2. Parents do expect and should receive some form of periodic written communication.
3. Reports to parents should provide easily understood indications of the child's performance in the following areas: adaptation to school, behavior, and progress in the different curriculum areas.
4. All check list types of report cards should include comments by the teacher.
5. Narrative type report cards are especially effective ways of communicating with parents but can involve too much teacher time.

Unquestionably the best way of communicating with parents is through a parent/teacher conference. The following lists of "commandments" can be used as a guide for maximizing their effectiveness.

Developmental Questionnaire

Information needed by the teaching staff can be collected through parent responses on a developmental questionnaire. The responses on this questionnaire should serve as the basis of a parent interview by the center director prior to the child's participation in the program. Additional comments for clarification of any of the parent responses can be recorded upon the questionnaire by the program director. The purpose of this questionnaire is to introduce the child to his teachers. It should be reviewed yearly for possible revision. A sample developmental questionnaire follows:

INTRODUCING MY CHILD: A DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Child's Name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Father's Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Give names and ages of other children in family:

_____

_____

Is any language other than English spoken at home?

_____

Is child toilet trained? _____

Describe toilet assistance needed and list words used: _____

What are your child's napping needs? _____

_____

Does child understand what is said to him? _____

Do you feel that child's speech is clear? _____

Has child learned to say nursery rhymes? _____

Sing songs? _____

Does child enjoy books? _____

Listening to stories? _____

At present time, do you have any special concerns in regard to child's development (i.e., speech, motor development, etc.)? _____

_____

Does child take any medication regularly? _____

_____

Do you restrict your child's diet in any way?

_____

Does child like to watch television? _____

What are child's favorite activities? _____

What does child enjoy doing with his mother?

_____

What does child enjoy doing with his father?

_____

Does child play well alone? _____

usually play with younger children? _____

with children his own age? _____

with older children? _____

brothers and sisters? _____

Does your child accept correction easily? _____

Circle items which describe your child:

happy	sleepy
friendly	impulsive
moody	quiet
dependent	stubborn
independent	subject to temper trantrums
attentive	even tempered
inattentive	puts away own belongings
clumsy	sympathetic
good body control	has fears
withdrawn	good natured

other _____

I have selected your program for my child because

_____

During the coming year, I would like my child to do/learn _____

As a parent, I will participate in your program by (i.e., attending parent meetings, volunteering in the classroom) _____

_____

Date _____

_____

Parent's Signature

Name of Test	Age	Type	Behaviors Measured	Special Characteristics
D.A.S.I.	6 months-5 years	Individual	Fine motor coordination, cause-effect & means-end relationships, association, number concepts, size discrimination & sensation	Adapted for handicapped children
Denver Developmental Screening Test	2 weeks-6 years	Individual	Gross motor, fine motor-adaptive, language, personal social	Provides developmental age range
DIAL: Development Indicators for the Assessment of Learning	2½-5½ years	Group	Gross motor, fine motor, communications	Places children in level 1, 2, or 3 for each area
Peabody Picture Vocabulary-Revised	2½-18 years	Individual	Measures verbal I.Q.	Useful for assessing I.Q. of children where there is a difference between receptive & expressive language skills
Slosson Intelligence Test	2 years and over	Individual	Verbal intelligence	Quick measure of verbal I.Q.
Birth to Three Developmental Scale	0-3 years	Individual	Language comprehension, language expresson, problem solving, social personal, motor	Provides developmental age range
Oregon Preschool Test of Interpersonal Cooperation	Preschool	Dyad	Levels of interaction	Measures cooperative levels
Washington Guide to Promoting Development in the Young Child	1-52 months	Individual	Sleep, play, language, motor, discipline, toilet training & dressing	Along with expected tasks, "suggested activities" are given for developmental enrichment
Portage Guide to Early Education	0-6 months	Individual	Infant stimulation, socialization, language, self-help cognitive, motor	Provides developmental age level
Early Intervention Developmental Profile	0-36 months	Individual	Perceptual/fine motor, cognition, language, social/emotional, self-care & gross motor	Shows child's relative strengths, weaknesses & developmental age level
Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development	0-7 years	Individual	Gross motor, speech & language	Shows areas of strength & weakness, data can be used with other testing information.

		Children's Names														
THREE YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:																
Language Comprehension	Points to 6 body parts.															
	Points to 6 objects.															
	Points to big, little, 4 colors.															
Production	Labels common body parts.															
	Uses phrases to express wants or needs.															
	Asks tag questions.															
Creativity	Uses gestures and pantomime.															
	Sings chorus portion of repetitive song.															
	Copies a circle.															
Problem-Solving	Selects objects that are the same.															
	Selects objects or squares of same color.															
	Selects objects of same shape.															
Pre-Reading (Visual Perception)	Copies 4 block staircase.															
	Copies pattern with 2 colors or shapes.															
	Stacks objects by size.															
	Guesses what comes next in pattern.															
	Places one block in each square.															
	Constructs bead-o-graph.															
	Fills in 2 holes in table blocks.															
	Matches 6 colors on lotto board.															

THREE YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:		Children's Names														
	Puts table blocks in frame.															
	Reproduces color block order with 2 blocks.															
Auditory Perception	Matches like sounds.															
	Matches sound and source.															
	Claps out rhythm pattern of name.															
Integration	Finds same objects as in feely bag.															
	Finds same shape as in feely bag.															
	Associates visual 1-2 dots with auditory sequence.															
Small Muscle	Builds 3 block tower.															
	With scissors cuts fringes on paper.															
	Imitates one clap patterns.															
Gross Motor	Jump up and down, feet together.															
	Toss bean bag in container (3 ft.)															
	Walks sideways across balance beam.															
	Stands on toes to count of 5.															

FOUR YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:		Children's Names
Language Comprehension	Points to big, little, and middle-sized shape.	
	Recognizes or demonstrates opposites.	
	Understands place and position words.	
Production	Uses negatives in sentence.	
	Uses personal pronouns.	
	Describes action picture with sentence.	
	Expresses self through dramatic play.	
	Participates in musical games.	
	Draws a man with face, arms, or legs.	
Problem-Solving	Sorts into piles objects of different shapes.	
	Classifies objects by category.	
	Copies an 8 block staircase.	
	Copies a pattern with 3 colors or shapes.	
	Lines up objects by thickness, weight, or height.	
	Guess what comes next in a 3 part pattern.	
	Constructs equivalent sets.	
	Places 1 bead on each stick.	
Pre-Reading	Traces overlapping circles.	
	Selects on basis of comparative size.	
	Copies block pattern with 6 blocks.	

FOUR YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:		Children's Names													
PR	Reproduces color block order with 3 blocks.														
Auditory Perception	Matches sound to sample.														
	Identifies location of sounds.														
	Copies simple 1-2 beat.														
Integration	Matches 4 objects touched to 4 seen.														
	Matches 4 shapes touched to 4 seen.														
	Associates visual 2-3 dots with auditory sequence.														
Small Muscle	Builds 4 block tower.														
	Cuts paper in half.														
	Imitates 3 out of 4 two clap patterns.														
Gross Motor	Jumps forward over balance beam.														
	Toss bean bag in box (4 ft.)														
	Walks forwards and backwards across beam.														
	Stands on one leg to five.														

FIVE YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:		Children's Names													
Language Comprehension	Recognizes singular and plural words.														
	Knows which item is not a member of a group.														
	Distinguishes subject from object in a sentence.														
Production	Explains something using "because."														
	Uses comparison words.														
	Asks "when," "where," and "how" questions.														
Creative Expression	Tells story associated with toy objects.														
	Sings simple song with group.														
	Draws hands, legs, eyes, mouth, nose, and trunk of man.														
Problem-Solving	Sorts into piles objects of same thickness or weight.														
	Completes double classification matrix.														
	Classifies objects in pictures by category.														
	Extends a block staircase.														
	Copies a pattern with color and shape or size.														
	Orders pictures by occurrence in time.														
	Guesses what comes next in 2 dimensional pattern.														
	Arranges objects in sets 1-10.														
	Arranges numerals and groups corresponding chips underneath.														
Visual Percep	Traces overlapping circles and square.														
	Selects on basis of comparative size with 3 table blocks.														

FIVE YEAR OLD CHECKLIST:		Children's Names														
Visual Percep	Matches 3 letters b-p-d.															
	Reproduces color block order with 4 blocks.															
Auditory Perception	Matches rhyming words.															
	Blends and separates words.															
	Recognizes words with like and different beginning sounds.															
Integration	Matching rhyming objects.															
	Matches 3 different logic blocks touched to 3 seen.															
	Associates visual 3-4-5 dots with auditory sequence.															
Small Muscle	Builds 5 block tower.															
	Cuts outlined figures.															
	Imitates 3 out of 4 3 clap patterns.															
Gross Motor	Jumps over slowly swinging rope.															
	Toss bean bag in box (6 ft.)															
	Walks forward half of beam—then backwards.															
	Balances on one knee and foot using same side hand for support.															

Teacher Assessment Form

Evaluation of _____ Position _____

Date _____ Evaluation _____

Job Description _____

_____

Is the job description accurate? (If the answer is "no" describe any discrepancies.) ☐Yes ☐No

_____

_____

Characteristics	Satisfactory	Other	Unsatisfactory
		Write in descriptive word and explain under comments	
1. Rapport with other staff members			
2. Rapport with parents			
3. Rapport with children			
4. Preparedness			
5. Classroom management			
6. Management of Environment			
7. Maintenance of records			
8. Initiative			
9. Personal appearance			
10. Work habits (dependable, punctual, etc.)			
11. Attitude toward job			
12. Professional growth			

Strongest assets? _____

Areas that need to be strengthened? _____

_____

Steps being taken or to be taken to improve performance? _____

_____

Comments _____

_____

_____ _____

Signature of Teacher Signature of Supervisor

Eleven Commandments for Effective Parent Conferences

1. Know the objective of the conference. If you have initiated the conference, be clear about your agenda. What are your objectives?

   If the parent has initiated the conference, think about the parent's potential objectives.

2. Be very certain that you and the parent have agreed on time and place and that you confirm the conference the day before by telephone or written notice.

3. Gather all back materials including all anecdotal reports and other records on the child that are available. Contact all other personnel within your organization who work with the child. You may want to invite other personnel to the conference. If it is appropriate for more than one person to be at the conference, discuss the objectives of the conference with the other persons.

4. Set up the conference room. DO NOT SIT BEHIND A DESK. Plan ahead for where the parent or parents will sit. Have an extra chair in case both parents come. If you expect that the parents will bring along other children, set aside a play area with appropriate materials.

5. BE ON TIME FOR THE CONFERENCE AND BE READY. Any papers that are to be used in the conference should be together and in a folder with the child's name on it.

6. Begin the conference by introducing yourself and your staff. USE FULL NAMES.

7. Following introductions, the initiator of the conference presents the objectives. If the parent initiated the conference you may want to open with a statement like, "I am glad we are able to get together. Tell me what you would like to discuss."

8. ASSUME THE ROLE OF LISTENER. A good listener:
   a. maintains eye contact, shows interest through facial expression and body position. Unless there is an emergency, do not accept telephone calls during a conference.
   b. respects the parents' ideas, whether or not they are in agreement.
   c. resists the temptation of becoming defensive or getting into a debate.
   d. recognizes that the real message may not be the same as the surface message.

9. Assume the role of facilitator. A good facilitator:
   a. creates a positive climate by emphasizing the plusses associated with the child.
   b. provides the parent with alternatives rather than solutions.
   c. describes ramifications of or problems associated with different alternatives.
   d. allows the parent to construct or help in the construction of the solution plan.
   e. outlines steps for the implementation of final plan.

10. End the conference on a positive note.
    a. Repeat the objectives of the conference.
    b. Summarize the solution plan.
    c. Detail the post-conference assignments.
    d. Make plans, if appropriate, for a follow-up conference.

11. Do your homework after the conference.
    a. Immediately, write a summary of the conference and the solution strategy.
    b. Write a brief note to the parents thanking them for attending the conference.
    c. Note on your calendar your own assignments and date-lines.

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